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FROM

Mrs. Franklin Q. Brown.

MC

THE VISIONARY:

FROM THE PAPERS OF THE COUNT DE O—.

A TALE FROM THE GERMAN OF SCHILLER.

E. FERRETT & CO.:

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Mrs. Franklin Q. Brown

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THE VISIONARY.

PART I.

I RELATE an adventure which will appear incredible to many, but of which I was myself for the most part an eye witness. To the few who are acquainted with a certain political occurrence—if perchance these pages find them still alive—it will give a welcome disclosure thereof; and even without this key, it will perhaps be important as a contribution to the history of fraud and the errings of the human mind. You will be astonished at the boldness of design which villany is able to plan and to prosecute; you will be astonished at the means which it can summon to secure the accomplishment of this design. Plain, unvarnished truth will guide my pen, for when these pages are published, I shall be no more, and shall never know their fate.

It was after my return to Curland in the year 17—, at the time of the Carneval, that I paid a visit to the Prince of — at Venice. We had become acquainted in the military service, and renewed here an acquaintance which peace had interrupted. Being desirous to see every thing remarkable in this city, and as the Prince was waiting for drafts to enable him to return to —, he easily persuaded me to bear him company, and to delay my departure until the time when he should leave Venice himself. We agreed not to separate from each other during our stay, and the Prince very kindly offered me a residence at his own lodging at the Moor.

Here he lived, preserving the strictest incognito, because he wished to live for his enjoyment;—neither would the small number of his attendants have allowed him to have maintained his exalted rank. Two cavaliers, upon whose silence he could perfectly depend, with a few faithful servants, composed his whole suite. He avoided expense more from temperament than from parsimony. He had retired from pleasure, and until his thirty-

fifth year had resisted all the charms of this voluptuous city. To the fair sex he was indifferent. A deep, earnest and enthusiastic melancholy marked his character. His inclinations were quiet but fixed, his attachments were slow and everlasting. In the midst of the noisy crowd of men he was solitary. Shut up in an imaginary world of his own creating, he was very often a stranger to the real, and because he knew he was a bad observer of things, he distrusted his own judgment, and had too exalted an opinion of the justice and correctness of that of others. Never was there a man more docile and yielding without being weak. Moreover, when convinced that he was right he was intrepid and true, possessing courage to oppose prejudices once understood, and to die if necessary in defence of justice.

As the first prince of his house his prospect of succeeding to the throne was but slight. His ambition had never been awakened. His passions had taken another direction.

Satisfied that he was not dependant on the will of others, he did not obtrude his own upon them as a law. The quiet peacefulness of an unconstrained private life was the limit of his wishes.

He read much, but without selection. A neglected education and an early entrance upon military life had not allowed his mind time to ripen. All the knowledge which he procured in after life only increased the confused chaos of his ideas, because the foundation was not firm.

Like all his family he was a protestant by birth, not from an examination of the subject, which he never made, notwithstanding he had been at one time of his life an enthusiast in religion. So far as I know he never became a free-mason.

One evening as according to our usual custom we were walking closely masked and separate from each other in the Place of St. Mark, as it began to be late and the crowd had dispersed, the Prince perceived that a mask followed us every where we went. The mask was an Armenian, and walked alone. We hastened our steps and tried to perplex him by frequently altering our route. In vain,—the mask still remained close behind us.

"You have not had an intrigue here?" said the Prince at last to me. "The husbands in Venice are dangerous."

"I do not know a single female in this city," I replied.

"Let us sit down here and speak in German," he continued, "I imagine we are mistaken for others."

We sat down on a stone bench, expecting that the mask would pass us by. He came directly to us and seated himself close beside the Prince. He drew out his watch and said to me in a loud voice in French as he arose—"Past nine o'clock! Come on,—we forget that they expect us at the Louvre."

This was but an invention to put the mask off our track.

"*Nine o'clock,*" repeated he, slowly and expressively, in the same language, "congratulate yourself, Prince," (calling him by his true name) "*at nine o'clock he died.*"

"Who died?" said the Prince after a long silence.

"Let us follow him," said I, "and demand an explanation."

We traversed every corner of St. Marks, but the mask was to be seen no more. We returned to our hotel unsatisfied. The Prince did not speak a word to me on the way, but walked aside and alone apparently struggling with powerful feelings in his own breast, as indeed he afterwards avowed to me. It was not until our arrival at home that he spoke.

"It is ridiculous," he said, "that two words from the lips of one who is undoubtedly insane, should so shake the peace of any man."

We wished each other a good night, and as soon as I had retired to my room I noted down in my tablets the day and the hour when this occurred. It was on Thursday.

The next evening the Prince said to me, "let us take a walk through the Place of St. Marks and search for our mysterious Armenian. I long to know the result of this comedy."

I was content. We remained at the place until eleven o'clock. The Armenian was nowhere to be seen. We repeated our walk for the next four nights, and with the same want of success each time.

When we left our hotel on the sixth night, I took a fancy—whether involuntary or on purpose I cannot recollect—to leave word with the servants where we could be found if any person inquired after us. The Prince remarked my precaution and smiled a commendation. There was a great crowd in the Place of St. Mark when we arrived there. We had scarcely proceeded thirty paces when I again remarked the Armenian, who worked himself through the crowd with hasty steps and appeared to be searching for some one. We were just about reaching him when the Baron de F——, of the Prince's suite, came up breathless and handed a letter to the Prince.

"It is sealed with black," he remarked, "we presumed that it required speed."

It struck me like a thunderbolt. The Prince had approached a flambeau and began to read.

"My cousin died—" he said.

"When?" I impetuously interrupted him.

He looked again into the letter.

"Last Thursday,—at nine in the evening."

We had not time to recover from our surprise when the Armenian stood among us.

"You are discovered here, most gracious Sir," he said to the Prince, "hasten to the Moor. You will find there the deputies; from the Senate. Do not hesitate to accept the honors intended for you. Baron de F—— forgot to tell you that your drafts had arrived." He then lost himself in the crowd.

We hastened to our hotel. All was as the Armenian had told us. Three nobles of the republic were ready to welcome the Prince and to accompany him in state to the assembly, where the high nobility of the city waited for him. He had scarcely time to give me to understand that he wished me to remain awake for him until his return home.

At night towards eleven o'clock he returned. Serious and thoughtful he entered the room and caught my hand, having first dismissed the servants.

"Count," said he to me, in the words of Hamlet,

"There are more things in heaven and earth,
Than are dreamt of in our philosophy!"

"Most gracious Sir," I answered, "you appear to forget that you go to bed richer by many hopes than when you arose." (The deceased was crown prince.)

"Do not remind me of it," said the Prince. "Even if the crown were mine, I have now more to do than to think of that trifle, unless this Armenian is a juggler."

"How is that possible, Prince?" I interrupted him.

"Then for a cowl I will give up to you all my princely hopes."

I relate this here, on purpose that it may serve as a proof how far his thoughts then were from any imperious design.

On the next evening we arrived earlier than usual at the Place of St. Mark. A sudden shower compelled us to step into a coffee house where gambling was going on. The Prince stood behind the chair of a Spaniard and watched the play. I had gone into an adjoining apartment where I was reading newspapers. But a short time elapsed ere I heard a noise. Before the arrival of the Prince the Spaniard had con-

tinually lost, now he won on every hand. The whole game had strikingly changed, and the bank was in danger of being challenged by the *pointeur*, whom this fortunate change had made bolder. A Venetian who kept it said to the Prince in an offensive tone, that he interrupted fortune and might better leave the table. The Prince looked coldly at him but remained at the table. He preserved the same countenance when the Venetian repeated his offensive language in French. The latter thinking that the Prince did not understand either language turned with a scornful laugh to his companions, "Tell me, gentlemen, how to make myself understood by this ninny?" At the same time he arose and wanted to take the Prince's arm, who, losing all patience, caught the Venetian and with a strong hand floored him roughly. In an instant the whole house was in commotion. I involuntarily arose at the noise. I called him by his name, "Take care Prince," I imprudently added, "we are in Venice." The name of the Prince commanded a general silence, which soon changed into a sort of murmuring which boded no good to me. All the Italians present crowded together and walked aside. One after another they left the saloon until the Prince and myself found ourselves alone, together with the Spaniard and some Frenchmen.

"You are lost, most gracious Sir," they said, "if you do not leave the city at once. The Venetian whom you treated so roughly is rich enough to hire a bravo. It will cost him but fifty zechins to remove you from the world."

The Spaniard offered to fetch a guard for the security of the Prince, and also to accompany us home himself. The Frenchmen made the same offer. We were yet standing consulting what was best to be done when some servants of the state entered. They produced an order from the Government by which we were both commanded to follow them with all speed. We were guided to the canal under a strong escort. Here a gondola awaited us which we were forced to enter. Before we left it we were blindfolded. We were led up a large stone staircase, and then through a long winding gallery over vaults, as I concluded from the manifold echoes which sounded beneath our feet. At last we came to other stairs which led us twenty-six steps down. Here a saloon was opened where the bandages were removed from our eyes. We found ourselves surrounded by venerable old men, all dressed in black, the whole saloon being draped with black and sparingly illuminated. A death-like silence pervaded the whole assembly, which made a fearful

impression upon us. One of these old men, probably the Chief Inquisitor of the State, approached the Prince, and asked him, as the Venetian was led in,—

“Do you recognise this man to be the same who offended you at the coffee house?”

“Yes,” answered the Prince.

Then turning to the prisoner the Inquisitor said, “Is this the same person whom you intended to murder to-night.”

The prisoner answered “Yes.”

Suddenly the circle opened, and we saw with horror the head of the Venetian severed from the trunk.

“Are you content with this satisfaction?” asked the Inquisitor of the State.

The Prince was lying in a swoon in the arms of his conductors.

“Go now,” the other continued in a terrible voice, addressing me, “and another time judge less hastily of justice in Venice.”

Who had been the secret friend who had saved us from certain death by means of the rapid arm of justice we were unable to guess. Almost benumbed with fear we reached our lodging. It was midnight; De F——, the gentleman of the Privy chamber, was waiting impatiently for us at the stairs.

“How good it was in you to send us word,” he said to the Prince as he lighted us up. “A rumor which the Baron de F—— brought us immediately afterwards, from the Place of St. Mark, caused us the deepest anguish.”

“I sent? When? I know nothing of it!”

“This evening after eight o’clock you sent us word not to be concerned if you came home to-night at a later hour than usual.”

Here the Prince looked at me and said, “Perhaps you have used this precaution without my knowledge.”

“I knew nothing of it.”

“Still, your grace, it must be so,” said the gentleman of the bed chamber, “for here is your repeater, which you sent along for a token.”

The Prince examined his watch pocket. The watch was indeed gone, and he perceived the one in question was his.

“Who brought it?” he asked with consternation.

“An unknown mask in an Armenian dress, who immediately withdrew.”

We stood and looked at each other.

“What do you think of it?” the Prince at last said after a long silence. “Somebody here in Venice watches me secretly.”

The terrible scene of this night induced a fever which obliged the Prince for eight days to confine himself to his room. At this time our hotel was crowded with Venetians and strangers, who were attracted by the discovered rank of the Prince. They vied with each other in proffered services, and we perceived with surprise, that as each one went away the next comer endeavoured to cast suspicion on him. Confidential letters flowed to us from every source. Every one tried to make himself of value in his own way. The whole of the occurrences in the Inquisition of State were no more mentioned. The Court at—— wishing to have the departure of the Prince delayed, gave orders to some Venetian bankers to pay him considerable sums of money. He was thus enabled against his will to prolong his stay in Italy, and, at his request, I also concluded to delay my departure.

When he was so far recovered as to be able to leave his room, the physicians prevailed upon him to take the air in a boat upon the Brenta. Just as we were going to enter the gondola, the Prince missed the key to a small trunk containing important papers. We returned immediately to search for it. He recollected distinctly that he locked the trunk on the preceding day, and since that time he had not left the room. But all searching was idle, we were forced to quit it, not to lose the time. The Prince, whose mind was above suspicion, declared it to be lost, and desired us to make no further mention of the matter.

The trip was most agreeable. A picturesque landscape that appeared to increase in beauty with every turn in the river—the serene beauty of the heavens, which formed a May day in mid winter—the charming gardens and tasteful villas without number, which adorned both sides of the Brenta,—behind us, majestic Venice, with a hundred towers and masts arising out of the water—all this presented to us the most splendid spectacle in the world. We yielded ourselves entirely to the happy effects of this beautiful scenery, we were in excellent humor; the Prince himself lost all his melancholy and vied with us in merry jokes. The sound of lively music reached our ears as we landed at a distance of two miles from the city. It came from a small village where a fair had just been held. The place was swarming with company of all kinds. A band of young boys and girls, all in theatrical attire, welcomed us with a pantomimic dance. It was something new,—ease and grace animated every movement. Before the dance was quite ended, the leader of it, who personated a queen, appeared suddenly to be stopped by an invisible arm. She and all the rest stood as if lifeless. The music was silent. Not a breath was to be heard in the whole

assemblage. There she stood, her eyes fixed upon the ground in deep silence. All at once she started up as if inspired and looked wildly around. "A king is amongst us," she cried, and taking the crown from her head she laid it at the feet of the Prince. At this, all present turned their eyes towards him, uncertain for a while whether there was a meaning in this acting, so fully had the passionate earnestness of the performer deceived them. A general burst of applause interrupted at length this silence. My eyes with a searching glance were turned toward the Prince. I perceived that he was not a little confounded, and took pains to avoid the gaze of the spectators. He threw money among the children and hastened to get away from the crowd.

We had proceeded but a few paces, when a venerable Franciscan friar elbowed his way through the crowd and stepped into the way of the Prince.

"Sir," said the monk, "give of your money to the Madonna,—you will need her prayers."

He spoke this in a tone of voice which puzzled us. The crowd took him away.

Our suite, meanwhile, had increased. An English lord¹ whom the Prince had already seen in Nice, some merchants from Livonia, a German Canon, a French Abbe with some ladies, and a Russian officer, joined us. The physiognomy of the latter had something very extraordinary about it, which attracted our attention. I had never seen such marked lineaments of countenance, so little expressive of a man's true character. Enticing benevolence and offensive coldness, dwelt together in the same face. All the passions appeared to have stirred in it, and to have left it again. Nothing remained but the quiet penetrating look of one who knows mankind. This singular man followed us at a distance, and appeared to take but slight notice of whatever chanced to occur.

We happened to stop before a booth where a lottery was drawing. The ladies tried their fortunes—the others followed their example. The Prince also demanded a ticket. He drew a snuff box. When he opened it, I saw him turn pale and start back. The key was lying in it.

"What is this?" said the Prince to me when we were alone for a moment. "A higher power pursues me. Omniscience hovers about me. An invisible being from whom I cannot escape guards my every footstep. I must search for the Armenian and seek light from him."

The sun was setting when we arrived before the villa

where supper was served. The name of the Prince had enlarged our company, so that it now numbered sixteen persons. Besides those above-mentioned, there had joined us a virtuoso from Rome, some Swiss, and an adventurer from Palermo, who wore an uniform, and called himself a captain. It was concluded we should spend the whole evening here, and return by torch-light. The conversation at the table was very lively, and the Prince could not forbear relating the occurrence of the key; it produced general surprise. This matter was thoroughly discussed. The greater part of the company asserted confidently, that all these apparently miraculous occurrences were but the result of legerdemain; the Abbe, who had already drank deeply, challenged the whole realm of spirits; the Englishman swore, the musician crossed himself against the devils. A few, and the Prince among them, thought that judgment upon these subjects should be suspended. The Russian officer, meanwhile conversed with the ladies, and appeared not to pay attention to the conversation. In the heat of the dispute, it was noticed that the Sicilian had departed. But a short half hour had elapsed, ere he returned enveloped in a cloak, and placed himself behind the Frenchman's chair.

"You have already shown the bravery," said he, "to challenge the ghosts in a body. Will you try your courage with *one*?"

"Done," said the Abbe,—“provided you will engage to procure one for me.”

"That I will do," answered the Sicilian, addressing the company, "when these ladies and gentlemen have left us."

"Why should we leave?" cried the Englishman, "a brave ghost is not afraid of a merry company."

"I will not answer for the result," said the Sicilian.

"For heaven's sake do not," the ladies at the table cried, as they rose frightened from their seats.

"Let your ghost come," the Abbe said daringly, "but warn him first that there are sharp blades here," he added as he asked one of the guests for his sword.

"That you may use at your pleasure," answered the Sicilian coldly, "if after you have seen, you still have a desire to do so." Then turning to the Prince he said, "most gracious sir, you assert that your key has been in strange hands,—can you guess in whose?"

"No."

"Do you not hit upon any one?"

"I had a suspicion, certainly."

"Would you know the person if you were to see him before you?"

"No doubt I would."

Here the Sicilian opened his cloak and presented a looking glass, which he held before the eyes of the Prince.

"Is this the person?"

The Prince started back in terror.

"What have you seen?" I asked.

"The Armenian!"

The Sicilian hid his looking-glass again under the cloak.

"Was it the same person you meant?" asked the whole company in the same breath.

"The same."

Every face changed at this announcement. The laughing ceased. All eyes were turned in curiosity upon the Sicilian.

"Monsieur l'Abbe," said the Englishman, "the matter is becoming serious,—I would advise you to think of a retreat."

"The fellow has the devil in him," cried the Frenchman, and ran out of the house. The ladies hastened from the room with shrieks. The virtuoso followed. The German Canon was snoring in a chair. The Russian kept his seat quietly as before.

"Perhaps you only wished to turn the laugh upon a boaster," the Prince began, after the others had departed, "if so, you will tell us."

"It is true," the Sicilian said, "I was not in earnest with the Abbe. I took him at his word because I well knew that the coward would not let it come so far. But the matter itself is too serious to make a jest of."

"You confess then, that it is in your power."

The magician was silent for a long time, and appeared to scan the Prince carefully with his eyes.

"Yes," he at last answered.

The curiosity of the Prince had at length reached the highest pitch. This had always been his favorite theory, and since the first appearance of the Armenian, all those ideas were again aroused, which his riper intellect and a better selection of reading had previously driven from his mind. He stepped aside with the Sicilian, and I heard him negotiating very pressingly.

"You have before you," he said, "a man who is burning with impatience to come to some conclusion in this important matter. I would embrace him as my benefactor, as my best

friend who would disperse my doubts and draw the veil from before my eyes. Will you deserve this favor from me?"

"What do you desire of me?" said the magician with hesitation.

"At present only a sample of your art—let me behold an apparition."

"What is to succeed this?"

"You can then judge from my more intimate acquaintance, whether I am worthy of higher instruction."

"I esteem you above all men, illustrious Prince," he said, "a secret power in your countenance of which you are not yourself aware, bound me to you at first sight. You are more powerful than you know yourself to be. You have unlimited sway over my whole power—but"—

"Then you will let me see an apparition."

"But I must first be sure that you do not make this demand from mere curiosity.—Though the invisible powers are somewhat at my command, it is under the holy condition that I do not misuse my power."

"My intentions are the purest. I seek truth."

Here they left the place where they had been standing, and stepped to a remote window. The Englishman, who had also heard this conversation, drew me aside.

"Your Prince is a nobleman," said he, "and I pity him. I will wager my soul that he is dealing with a rascal."

"That depends upon the manner in which he gets out of this affair," I replied.

"My word for it," said the Englishman, "that the poor devil sells himself dearly now. He will not display his art until he hears the jingle of money. Here are nine of us, let us make a collection. This will render him pliable and perhaps may result in opening the eyes of the prince."

"I am content."

The Englishman then threw six guineas on a plate and passed it round. Every one contributed something. The Russian was particularly pleased with our proposition. He put a bank note of an hundred zechins upon the plate, a prodigality which frightened the Englishman. We brought the collection to the Prince.

"Have the goodness," said the Englishman, "to intercede with this gentleman for us, and induce him to show us a specimen of his art, and to accept of this small token of our gratitude."

The Prince laid a valuable ring upon the plate and handed it to the Sicilian. He hesitated for some seconds.

"Gentlemen," he began at last, "this generosity humbles me, but I yield to your request.—Your wish shall be complied with. As for this gold," he added, ringing a bell, "to which I have myself no right, you will allow me to dispose of it at the nearest Benedictine Convent in charitable purposes. This ring I will keep as a valuable token of remembrance of the most estimable Prince."

Here the landlord entered, to whom he at once delivered the money.

"Nevertheless he is a rascal," whispered the Englishman in my ear. "He refuses the money because the Prince is now a more interesting object for his attention."

"What do you demand?" the magician now asked the latter.

The Prince considered a moment.

"Let us have a great man at once," cried the English nobleman. "Ask for the Pope Gangenelli. It will be no more trouble to the gentleman."

The Sicilian bit his lips.

"I dare call upon no one who has been ordained."

"That is bad," said the Englishman; "perhaps we should have heard from him of what disease he died."

"The Marquis of Lanoy," the Prince now began, "was a French Brigadier in the last war, and one of my most intimate friends. In the battle of Flastinbeck he received a mortal wound and was carried to my tent, where in a short time he died in my arms. When already in the death struggle he motioned me towards him. 'Prince,' he began, 'I shall see my fatherland no more; therefore learn a secret to which I alone have the key. In a convent on the borders of Flanders lives a—' Here he died. The hand of death cut the thread of his speech. I should like to have him here and hear the continuation."

"Well asked," cried the Englishman with an oath, "I will declare you to be the greatest conjurer on earth if you solve this matter."

We admired the ingenious choice of the Prince and approved it unanimously. Meanwhile the magician strided up and down the room and appeared to be struggling with himself irresolutely.

"And that was all the dying man had to say?"

"All."

"Did you make no farther enquiries concerning the matter in his native land?"

"They were all in vain."

"Had the Marquis of Lanoy lived a blameless life? I dare not summon every dead man."

"He died repenting the excesses of his youth."

"Do you by chance carry any token whereby to remember him, with you?"

"Yes."

It was true the Prince carried a snuff-box, containing the miniature of the Marquis in enamel, which had been lying near him on the table.

"I wish it not—let me alone—you shall see the deceased."

We were requested to go into the adjoining apartment until he might call us. At the same time he had all the furniture removed from the saloon, the windows taken out and the shutters carefully closed. He commanded the landlord, with whom he appeared to have been previously intimate, to bring a vessel of hot coals, and to extinguish all the fire in the house carefully with water. Before we went away he took the word of each one separately that an eternal silence should be observed about what we might see and hear. Every door in this apartment was bolted behind us.

It was past eleven o'clock and a death-like silence reigned throughout the whole house. When we went out the Russian asked me whether we had charged pistols with us.

"For what?" said I.

"For any emergency," replied he.

"Wait a moment, I will look for some."

He withdrew. Baron de F—— and myself opened a window opposite the saloon which we had just left, and it appeared to us as if we heard two men whispering to each other, and a noise, as if a ladder was being raised up. Yet this was a mere supposition on our part. After an absence of half an hour the Russian returned with a pair of pistols. We saw him load them with balls. It was nearly two o'clock when the magician re-appearing announced that it was time. Before we entered the room we were commanded to put off our shoes and to appear only in shirt, stockings, waistcoat and breeches. The door was bolted behind us as in the first instance.

When we returned into the saloon we saw a large circle drawn upon the floor, with charcoal, within which all ten of us could conveniently stand. Round about it on each of the

four sides of the room, the boards had been taken up, so that we stood as it were on an island. An altar covered with black cloth, was erected in the middle of the circle, under which a carpet of red satin was laid. A Chaldean Bible was lying near, upon the altar was a skull which had been opened, and to it was fastened a silver crucifix. Instead of candles, alcohol was burning in a silver vessel. The thick smoke of burning drugs darkened the saloon, in which the lights were already, almost all, extinguished. The conjurer was like ourselves undressed, but barefooted. On his bare neck he wore an amulet, suspended by a chain of human hair, and around his loins he had wrapped a white apron, which was marked with secret cyphers and symbolical figures. He bid us join our hands, and preserve a perfect silence. Above all he recommended to us to put no questions to the apparition. He desired the Englishman and myself, whom he appeared to distrust most, to hold two naked swords, motionless, across each other, an inch above his head. This we were to do while the performance lasted. We were standing in a semi-circle around him. The Russian officer pressed close to the Englishman, and stood nearest the altar. With his face turned towards the East, the magician now stepped upon the carpet, sprinkled holy water towards each of the four points of the compass, and bowed himself three times before the Bible. The conjuration, not a word of which we understood, lasted about eight minutes. After it was finished, he signed to those who stood next behind him, to take him and hold him firmly by the hair. Then, all the while in the most violent convulsions, so that he was held with difficulty, he called the deceased three times by name—the third time extending his hand towards the crucifix.

All at once we felt, at the same instant, a shock as if from a stroke of lightning. Our hands flew from each other. A sudden thunder clap shook the house. All the keys clinked in the locks. The doors slammed. The cover of the vessel containing the alcohol shut of itself, and the light was extinguished. On the wall opposite, over the fire place, appeared a human figure clad in a bloody shirt, and with a countenance pale and ghastly like that of a dying person.

"Who calls me?" said a hollow voice scarcely audible.

"Your friend," the conjurer replied, "who honors your memory and prays for your soul." At the same time he pronounced the name of the Prince.

The answers in every case were made after long intervals.

"What does he ask?" the voice concluded.

"He wishes to hear the confession which you commenced in this world and did not conclude."

"In a convent on the borders of Flanders lives—"

Here the house shook again. The door opened of its own accord, and a violent thunder-clap succeeded. Lightning illumined the whole apartment, and another *corporeal* figure, bloody and pale like the first, but more horrible, appeared upon the threshold. The alcohol began again to burn of its own accord, and the apartment became light as before.

"Who is among us," cried the magician in terror, and casting a look of horror through the assemblage—"I did not want you."

The figure went with a mystic, yet noiseless step until it was opposite us upon the carpet, when it seized the crucifix. The first figure we saw no more.

"Who calls me?" asked the second apparition.

The magician began to tremble violently. Horror and astonishment had seized us. I caught my pistol. The magician snatched it from my hand and discharged it at the figure. The ball rolled slowly upon the altar, and the figure, unharmed, stepped from the cloud of smoke. The magician now sank down in a swoon.

"What will this result in?" cried the Englishman in astonishment, and he wished to give the apparition a blow with his sword, but the figure lightly touched his arm, and the blade dropped from his hand upon the floor. My brow was wet with drops of sweat, caused by intense anxiety. Baron de F——, afterwards confessed to me that he prayed. All this time the Prince stood quiet and fearless, his eyes fixed upon the apparition.

"Yes! I know you," he at last said with emotion, "you are Lanoy,—you are my friend. Whence do you come?"

"Eternity is dumb. Ask of matters relating to that which occurred in the life which is passed."

"Who lives in the convent to which you directed my attention?"

"My daughter."

"What! were you a father?"

"Alas! that I was not."

"Are you not happy, Lanoy?"

"God has judged."

"Can I be of service to you in this world?"

"Of none, but to care for yourself."

"How am I to do that?"

"You will learn at Rome."

Here another thunder-clap succeeded, and a cloud of black smoke filled the room.—When it had dissolved away there was no figure to be seen. I opened the window shutter. It was morning.

The magician now recovered from his swoon. "Where are we," he cried when he saw the day light. The Russian officer stood close behind him and looked over his shoulder. "Juggler," he said to him with a terrible look, "you will never summon another spirit."

The Sicilian turned around, looked close into his face, cried aloud and fell at this feet.

We all now looked at the supposed Russian. In the lineaments of his countenance the Prince had no difficulty in recognizing the Armenian. The words which he was about to utter died upon his lips. We were petrified with fright and surprise. Silent and motionless we regarded this mysterious being, who contemplated us with a calm look of power and greatness. Minute after minute this silence lasted. Not a breath was heard in the whole assembly.

Some heavy knocks at the door at last restored us to ourselves. The door fell broken in pieces into the saloon, and some police officers accompanied by a guard entered. "Here we find them altogether!" said the leader, and turned to his companions. "In the name of the government," he said to us, "I arrest you." We had no time for consideration. In a moment we were surrounded. The Russian officer, whom I shall now again designate as the Armenian, drew the leader of the bum bailiffs aside, and as far as the confusion would permit, I perceived that he whispered some words into his ear and showed him something written on a paper. The constable left him immediately with a silent and respectful bow, turned towards us, and taking off his hat said, "Pardon me, gentlemen, that I should have confounded you with this impostor. I will not ask who you are, this gentleman assures me that I have gentlemen of honor before me." At the same time he made a sign to his companions to release us. He ordered that the Sicilian should be bound and well guarded. "This fellow," he added, "is over-ripe. We have already watched him for seven months."

This miserable man was indeed an object of pity. The double fright of this second apparition, and the surprise of his unexpected arrest, had totally overcome his power of mind.

He suffered himself to be bound like a child. His eyes were wide open and straining with a deathlike glare, and his lips trembled in silent convulsions. No sound came from them. Every moment we expected to see his whole frame become convulsed. The Prince pitied his condition, and undertook to effect his release with the tipstaff, to whom he made himself known.

"Most gracious Sir," he said, "in whose favor do you interest yourself so generously. The fraud which he wished to practice upon you is his least offence. We have his accomplices who accuse him of the most detestable crimes. He may think himself lucky if he escapes with the galleys."

Meanwhile we saw the landlord also and his domestics, bound with ropes, led through the yard.

"He also?" said the Prince. "What is he guilty of?"

"He was his accomplice and concealer," answered the chief of the hum bailiffs, "his auxiliary in juggling and thieving, and the sharer of his spoil. You shall be convinced directly most generous Sir," and turning to his companions he added, "search the house and bring whatever you may find."

The Prince now looked for the Armenian, but he was no more to be seen. In the general confusion caused by the arrest he had found means to slip off unnoticed. The Prince was inconsolable. He wished to send all his people after him; he wished to search for him himself and to take me along.

I hastened to the window. The whole house was surrounded by the curious whom the rumor of this occurrence had brought together. It was impossible to get through the crowd. I pointed this out to the Prince.

"If the Armenian really intends to conceal himself," I said, "he no doubt knows all the by-ways better than we, and all our searching will be in vain. Let us rather remain where we are, most gracious Prince. Perhaps this tipstaff, to whom he has made himself known, if I have seen aright, can tell us something concerning him."

We now for the first time thought that we were in undress. We hastened to our room and put on our clothes. When we returned, the searching of the house was finished.

After the altar was removed, and the floor of the apartment opened, a vault was discovered, large enough for a man conveniently to seat himself in, provided with a door which led by a small stair case to the cellar. In this vault was

found an electrical apparatus, a watch and a small silver bell, which latter, as was also the electrical apparatus, was in communication with the altar and the crucifix which was attached to it. A window shutter directly opposite the place was pierced and furnished with a bolt, for the purpose, as we were afterwards told, of fitting a magic lantern in the opening, from which the desired figure might be cast on the wall above the fire place. From the garret and cellar several drums were brought to which large leaden balls were fastened with strings, probably to produce the noise we had taken for thunder. When the clothes of the Sicilian were searched, powders of different kinds were found in a case, as also quicksilver in vials and boxes, phosphorus in a glass bottle, a ring which we knew at once to be a magnet because it attached itself to a steel button with which it was accidentally brought in contact. In the coat pockets were a paternoster, a Jew's beard, a pair of small pocket pistols and a dagger.

"Let us see," said one of the constables, "whether they are charged," and taking one of the pistols he discharged it into the chimney.

"Jesu Maria," exclaimed a human voice in a sepulchral tone, the same which we had heard at the time of the apparition, and at the same moment we saw a bleeding body fall from the chimney.

"Not at rest yet, poor ghost," cried the Englishman, as the rest of us retreated with horror. "Go to your grave. You have appeared to be what you were not, now you will be what you appeared.

"Jesu Maria! I am wounded," cried the man who had fallen from the chimney. The ball had crushed his right leg. The wound was immediately dressed.

"But who are you, and what evil spirit brought you here?"

"A poor Benedictine," answered the wounded man. "A stranger who was here offered me a zechin if I"—

"Would repeat a form of words; and why did not you go away at once?"

"He was to have given me a sign how long I was to remain, but the sign failed, and when I wished to ascend, the ladder was withdrawn."

"And what is the form of words which he taught you?"

Here he swooned so that nothing further could be elicited from him, and the Prince addressed himself to the chief of the constables.

"You have," he said, at the same time putting some pieces

of gold into his hand, "you have saved us from the hands of an impostor and have done us justice without even knowing us. Will you now complete our obligation to you by revealing to us who was this unknown individual who procured our liberty at the expense of so few words?"

"Whom do you mean?" asked the constable, his countenance at the same time showing how unnecessary the question was.

"I mean the gentlemen in a Russian uniform, who drew you aside, showed you something written on a paper, and whispered something in your ear, whereupon you immediately released us."

"Then you did not know this gentleman," the constable again asked; "he did not belong to your company?"

"No," said the Prince, "and for very important reasons I wish to become better acquainted with him."

"Neither do I know him more particularly than yourself," said the constable. "I do not even know his name, and saw him to-day for the first time in my life."

"What! and in so short a time he acquired so much influence over you that upon his simple word you believed both himself and us to be innocent?"

"Yes, with a single word."

"And that was—I confess I should like to know it."

"This unknown individual," said the constable weighing the zechins in his hand,—"you have been too generous towards me for me to make a secret of it any longer,—this unknown individual was an officer of the Inquisition of the State."

"Of the Inquisition of the State? He an officer!"

"Nothing else, most gracious Sir, and of that the paper he showed me convinced me at once."

"This man?—you say—it is impossible."

"I will tell you still more, most gracious Sir; he was the very same upon whose information I was sent here to arrest this conjurer of ghosts."

We looked at each other in still greater surprise.

"There we have it," said the Englishman at length. "The reason is now plain why the poor devil of a conjurer started back in such fear when he had scanned his face more narrowly. He knew that he was a spy, and therefore shrieked and fell at his feet."

"By no means," said the Prince. This man is possessed of power which he commands at will. What he really is, I

do not believe that any man knows. Did you see the Sicilian sink down when he spoke the words in his ear, 'you will never raise another ghost.' There is more in this matter than is apparent. No one shall persuade me that it is usual for one to be frightened to such a degree by anything human."

"Of that the magician himself will probably be able to give us the best information," said the nobleman, "if this gentleman (addressing the leader of the tipstaves) will afford us the opportunity to speak to his prisoner."

The leader of the tipstaves promised to do so, and we agreed with the Englishman to inquire after him on the next morning. We returned to Venice.

Early the next morning, Lord Seymour, which was the English nobleman's name, was with us, and soon after a confidential messenger from the tips' aff arrived to conduct us to the prison. I have forgotten to state that the Prince had for several days missed one of his huntsmen, who was born in Bremen, and who had served him faithfully for many years and possessed his entire confidence. Whether he had perished, or been kidnapped, or had run away, no one knew. For the latter there was no probable cause, as he had always been a quiet and regular man and had never been found fault with. All that his comrades could recollect was, that latterly he had been very melancholy, and whenever he could steal a moment of leisure from his duties, had visited a certain convent in the Giudecca, where he often had intercourse with some of the brothers. This made us conjecture that he had fallen into the hands of the Priests and turned Catholic, and as the Prince at that time was very tolerant or rather very indifferent in the matter of religion, after some fruitless inquiries he pushed the matter no farther. Yet the loss of this man, who had been at his side in all his campaigns, seriously annoyed him. He had been a trusty follower, and in a strange country his place could not easily be supplied. To-day, however, as we were just going out, the Prince's banker, who had been commissioned to procure another servant, was announced. He introduced to the Prince a good looking and well dressed man of middle age, who had been for a long time in the service of a procurator, as secretary, spoke French and a little German, and was moreover furnished with the best recommendations as to character. His appearance was prepossessing, and moreover he expressed himself willing that his salary should depend upon the degree of satisfaction which his services gave the Prince. He employed him at once.

We found the Sicilian in a private apartment of the prison, to which the tipstaff said he had been brought for a time, in order to please the Prince, before he was taken under the leaden roof:—to which part of the prison there is no admittance. These leaden roofs are the most horrible prisons in Venice, wherein the unfortunate criminals often suffer to madness from the parching heat of the sun which is concentrated upon the leaden surface. They are under the same roof with the Palace of St. Mark. The Sicilian had recovered from the occurrences of the previous day, and rose respectfully when he saw the Prince. One leg and one arm were chained together, otherwise he could walk freely about the room. When we entered the guard went out.

"I come," the Prince said, "to demand an explanation from you on two points. The one it is your duty to give me, and it will not be to your disadvantage to satisfy me upon the other."

"My part is played," replied the Sicilian, "my fate is in your hands."

"Your sincerity alone can lighten it."

"Ask most gracious Sir, I am ready to answer. I have nothing more to lose."

"You showed me the face of the Armenian in your mirror—how was that effected?"

"What you saw was not a mirror. A mere portrait behind a glass representing a man in an Armenian dress deceived you. My haste, the twilight and your astonishment assisted the deception. The picture itself may be found among the other things seized at the hotel."

"But how could you know my thoughts so well and hit so readily upon the Armenian?"

"That was not difficult, most gracious Sir. Doubtless you have sometimes, at table, in the presence of your servants, spoken of the adventure which happened between you and this Armenian. One of my people accidentally became acquainted in the Giudecca with a huntsman, from whom he by degrees extracted as much as he wanted to know."

"Where is this huntsman?—asked the Prince, I have missed him, and you appear to have some knowledge of his absence."

"I swear that I have no knowledge of him whatever, most gracious Sir. I never saw him myself, and never had any other information from him but what I have mentioned."

"Go on," said the Prince.

"In that way in a general manner I received the first notice of your presence and your adventures in Venice, and I resolved at once to profit by my information. You see, most gracious Sir,

that I am sincere. I knew of your intended trip on the Brenta; I was provided for it, and a key, which you accidentally dropped, gave me the first opportunity to try my art upon you."

"What! Then I was mistaken? The matter of the key was your work and not that of the Armenian? You say that I dropped the key?"

"Yes, when you drew out your purse, and I watched the moment when no one observed me, to cover it quickly with my foot. The person of whom you bought the lottery ticket was in understanding with myself. He let you draw from a vessel in which there were no blanks and the key was in the box long before it was won by you."

"Now I understand it. And the friar who threw himself in my pathway and addressed me so solemnly—"

"Was the same who I afterwards understood was drawn wounded from the chimney. He is one of my comrades who has done me many a good turn in this disguise."

"But to what intent did you contrive all this?"

"To excite your curiosity—to set you to thinking—to produce in you a state of mind which should render you susceptible to the marvellous deeds which I intended to practice upon you."

"But the pantomimic dance, which took such a surprising and singular turn—that at least was not an invention of yours?"

"The girl who represented the queen had her cue from me, and the whole matter was of my arrangement. I presumed that it would surprise your grace not a little to discover that you were known at this place, and, pardon me gracious Sir, the adventure with the Armenian had led me to hope that you were already inclined to scorn natural interpretations and search for higher sources of the extraordinary."

"Indeed!" the Prince exclaimed with an air of vexation and surprise, at the same time giving me a peculiar and significant glance. "Indeed I did not expect that."*

* NOTE BY THE AUTHOR.—And probably my readers did not expect it either. This crown laid so unexpectedly and solemnly at the feet of the Prince, taken together with the preceding prophecy of the Armenian, appears to point so naturally and unaffectedly to a certain purpose, that, at the first reading of these memoirs, I immediately recollected the captious address of the witches in *Macbeth*:

"Hail to thee, Thane of Glamis, that will be King,"

And probably this occurred to others as well as myself. When any thing is presented to the mind in a solemn and extraordinary manner, it cannot fail that all succeeding circumstances which are capable of being in any way connected with it, will naturally do so, all mingling together

"But," continued the Prince after a long silence, "how did you produce the figure, that appeared on the wall over the mantle-piece?"

"By means of the magic lantern, which was fixed to the opposite window-shutter where you will find an opening."

"But how did it happen that none of us perceived it?" asked Lord Seymour.

"You will recollect, most gracious sir, that a thick smoke caused by burning olibanum darkened the whole apartment. At the same time I used the precaution to have the boards which were taken up from the floor placed against the window in which the magic lantern was fixed, by which I prevented the shutter from striking the eye at once. Besides the lantern was covered by a slide until you had all taken your places, and no further examination was to be feared."

"It appeared to me," said I, "as if I heard a ladder put up in the neighbourhood of the saloon when I looked out of the window of the other pavilion. Was that the case?"

"Exactly so. The ladder was the same by which my assistant ascended to the window to direct the magic lantern."

"The figure," continued the Prince, "appeared really to possess a slight resemblance to my deceased friend. It was particularly like him in being very fair. Was that a mere accident, or by what means was it accomplished?"

"Your grace will recollect that at the table you had lying by your side a snuff-box, upon the cover of which was enamelled the portrait of an officer in uniform. I asked you if you did not carry with you some token whereby to remember your friend?—to which you replied in the affirmative. I concluded that the snuff-box might perhaps be this token. While at the table I had fixed the picture well in my memory, and being well skilled in drawing, and fortunate in copying the original, it was easy for me to give to the picture the slight resemblance which you perceived, and the more so as the lineaments of the Marquis strike the eye at once."

"But the figure appeared to move?"

"It appeared so—but it was the smoke upon which it was reflected, and not the image, which really moved."

like parts of a whole. The Sicilian, who, as it appears, intended in the whole affair to do no more than to surprise the Prince by giving him to understand that his rank was discovered, has assisted the Armenian without being aware of it. But whatever of interest the affair may lose by taking away the higher purpose for which it appeared to have been planned at first, I dare not encroach upon historical truth, and I therefore give the fact as I found it.

"And the man in the chimney was spokesman for the apparition?"

"Exactly."

"But still, he could not well hear your questions."

"It was needless that he should. You will remember, most gracious Prince, that I strictly forbade you all from addressing a question to the spectre yourselves. The questions to be asked and the answers to be given were previously agreed upon, and that there might be no mistake, I made the intervals between the questions very short, and he counted the time by the strokes of a clock."

"You commanded the landlord to have all the fires in the house carefully extinguished with water; that no doubt was done—"

"To prevent my man in the chimney from danger of suffocation, because the chimneys in the house join together, and I thought myself not quite safe on account of your suite."

"But how did it happen," Lord Seymour asked, "that your ghost was visible neither earlier nor later than you wished?"

"My ghost was already in the room long before I called it forth, but as long as the alcohol was burning, this reflection, which was of a paler light, could not be seen. When my formula of conjuration was ended I shut the vase in which the alcohol was burning, and it became dark in the saloon, and the figure on the wall, where it had all along been reflected, was now for the first time perceived."

"But at the same moment when the ghost appeared we all felt an electric shock. How did you produce that?"

"You discovered the machine under the altar; you saw also that I was standing upon a silken carpet. I placed you around me in a semi-circle, you having hold of each other's hands. When the time approached I made a sign to one of you to catch me by the hair. The silver crucifix was the conductor and you received the shock when I touched it with my hand."

"You commanded us, the Count de O—— and myself," said Lord Seymour, "to hold two naked swords above your head as long as the conjuration lasted. Why was this?"

"For no other purpose than to give employment during the whole performance to you two whom I trusted least. You remember that I expressly told you to hold it at the distance of one inch above my head. By always observing the same distance you were prevented from directing your attention where I did not desire it. My worst enemy I had not then observed."

"I must confess," exclaimed Lord Seymour, "that you acted cautiously—but why had we to undress ourselves?"

"Only to give a character of great solemnity to the performance and to raise your curiosity by doing that which was not usual."

"The second apparition did not suffer your ghost to speak," said the Prince. "What should we have heard from him?"

"Almost the same which you heard afterwards. I asked your grace, not without purpose, whether you had told me all with which the dying man had charged you, and whether you had made no further inquiries in his native land; this I found necessary so as not to come in collision with facts, which would have contradicted the declarations of my ghost. I asked whether the deceased had lived unblameable, and on the answer which you gave me, I founded my invention."

"On this subject," the Prince began after a short silence, "you have given me a satisfactory disclosure. But the principal particulars concerning which I demanded light from you are yet unanswered."

"If it is in my power, and—"

"No conditions. Justice, in whose hands you are, will not ask so discreetly. Who was this unknown man, before whom we saw you fall down? What do you know of him? How did you get acquainted with him? And what are the circumstances connected with this second apparition?"

"Most gracious Prince—"

"When you looked close into his face a loud cry escaped you and you fell prostrate. Why was that? What did it signify?"

"This unknown, most gracious Prince"—He stopped evidently disturbed and looked at us by turns with an embarrassed air. "Yes, I solemnly swear, most gracious Prince, that this unknown is a most terrible being."

"What do you know of him? What connexion has he with you? Do not hope to conceal the truth from us."

"I shall take care for that, for who can warrant that he does not stand in our midst at the present moment?"

"Where? Who?" we all exclaimed at the same moment and looked around the room half laughing, half perplexed. "That is impossible."

"O! this man, be he who he may, can do things which are far less easy to be comprehended."

"But who is he? Where does he come from? Armenian or Russian? Of all which he pretends to be, what is his true character?"

"He is not what he appears. There will be found few ranks or nations of which he has not worn the mask. Who is he—"

where came he from, and where is he going—no one knows. That he was a long time in Egypt, as many assert, and there obtained his secret wisdom among the catacombs, I will neither affirm nor deny. With us, he is only known by the name of 'THE UNFATHOMABLE.' How old, for instance, do you suppose him to be !"

"To judge from external appearances he can scarcely be past forty."

"And how old do you think I am ?"

"Not far from fifty."

"Exactly, and if I now tell you that I was yet a lad of seventeen years when my grandfather spoke to me of this wonderful man, whom he had seen in Famagosta, apparently of the same age of which he now appears to be."

"That is ridiculous—incredible and exaggerated."

"Not a jot. If these fetters did not detain me I would produce witnesses whose venerable appearance would not leave a doubt in your minds. There are persons of credibility who recollect having seen him in different parts of the world at the same time. No sword's point can pierce him—no poison hurt him—no fire injure him—no ship in which he is ever sinks.—Time itself appears to have lost its power on him. Years do not impair his physical energies, and age cannot bleach his head. No one ever saw him take food, he never looks upon a woman, sleep never visits his eyes. Of all the hours in the day there is but one over which he has no control, and during which he is not engaged in earthly avocations."

"Ah !" said the Prince, "and what hour is that !"

"The twelfth at night. As soon as the clock strikes that hour he belongs no more to the living. Wherever he may be he must depart—whatever business he may be engaged in transacting, he must cut it short. This terrible stroke of the clock tears him from the arms of friendship,—tears him even from the altar, and were he in the midst of a duel, were his honor at stake, it would call him even thence. Then he departs—no one knows where, and performs—no one knows what. No one ventures to question, much less to follow him, for as soon as the fearful moment comes, his features at once contract with an expression of severity so dark and fearful that every one loses courage to look him in the face or speak to him. A deep, death-like silence will terminate the most lively conversation, and all who are around him wait for his reappearance with respectful awe, without venturing to leave their places or open the door through which he has passed."

"But is nothing extraordinary perceived when he returns?" asked one of us.

"Nothing—more than he looks pale and fatigued, like a man who has undergone a painful operation, or received disagreeable news. Some have remarked drops of blood upon his shirt.—But of that I am unable to speak."

"But has the attempt never been made to conceal this hour from him, or to amuse him to such a degree that he should forget it?"

"Once only, it is said, he overstepped the time. The assembly was numerous, they remained until a late a late hour of the night, and all the clocks were set back on purpose to deceive him, and he was deeply engaged in a conversation where lively wit predominated. When the appointed hour arrived he suddenly became speechless and benumbed. All his limbs remained in the same position in which this accident had surprised him. His eyes were closed, his pulse ceased to beat, and all means which were employed to resuscitate him were perfectly fruitless. And in this condition he remained until the hour was passed. Then of his own accord he suddenly recovered, opened his eyes, and continued the conversation at the same syllable where he had been interrupted. A general consternation among the company betrayed to him what had occurred, and then he declared in a manner at once decided and fearful that they might consider themselves fortunate in having escaped with a simple fright. But the city where it occurred to him, he left the same evening forever. The general belief is, that he holds intercourse with his master spirit at that secret hour. Some, even believed him to be a dead person, who is permitted to walk among the living for twenty-three hours of the day, but that during the twenty-fourth his soul is forced to return to the land of spirits, to suffer its doom. Many also think him to be *APOLLONIUS* of Tyana; others, still, suppose him to be the apostle John, of whom it was said that he should remain until the last day—the day of judgment."

"Of course, strange suppositions will not be found wanting in regard to such an extraordinary man. But all you have said is only hearsay, and yet his deportment towards yourself and yours towards him, appeared to signify a more intimate acquaintance. Is there not at the bottom of this some more particular story in which you were yourself involved?"

The Sicilian looked at us doubtfully and was silent.

"If there is anything in relation to this matter which you would not wish to have known," continued the Prince, "I

assure you, in the name of these two gentlemen, of the most inviolable secrecy. But speak sincerely and without reserve."

"If I can hope," he began after a long silence, "that it will not come up in evidence against me, I would tell you of a remarkable adventure with this Armenian, of which I was an eye-witness, and which will leave no doubt upon your minds of this man's secret power. But I must have the permission," added he, "to conceal some names."

"Can you not tell it without this condition?"

"No, most gracious Sir, it involves the reputation of a family which I have reason to honor."

"Let us hear it," said the Prince.

"Five years may have rolled over," began the Sicilian, "since I became acquainted at Naples, where I pursued my arts with tolerable success, with a certain Laurence del M^{tte}, chevalier of the Order of St. Stephen, a young and wealthy cavalier of one of the first houses in the kingdom, who overwhelmed me with favors and appeared greatly to respect my secret arts. He informed me that the Marchese del M^{tte}, his father, was a great admirer of cabalistic arts, and would consider himself happy to have a philosopher, as he pleased to call me, under his roof. The old man lived on one of his estates, near the sea, about thirty miles from Naples, where he mourned in total seclusion from mankind the memory of a dear son, of whom he had been bereaved by a terrible stroke of fate. The Chevalier gave me to understand that both himself and family might one day stand in need of me in a very serious and important affair, perhaps to receive from my secret science the disclosure of a matter wherein all natural means had been fruitlessly exhausted. He particularly and significantly remarked that he might perhaps have reason to consider me as the creator of his peace—nay of his earthly happiness. The circumstances were as follows. This Laurence was the younger son of the Marchese, and on this account he was destined for the clerical profession, the estates of the family devolving upon his brother, Jeronymo, that was the name of the elder brother, who had spent several years in travelling and had returned to his native land about seven years before the adventure which I am now about relate, to be married to the only daughter of a neighboring nobleman, the Count de C^{tti}. This match had been agreed upon by both families since the birth of the children, in order that by this means their large estates might be united. It was entirely a match of convenience, and the hearts of the parties interested were not taken into consideration in the matter. They had silently assented. Jeronymo del M^{tte} and Antonia C^{tti}

had been educated together, and the slight restraint which had been imposed upon the intercourse of two children who were already considered as engaged, had early produced a tender intelligence between them, which was strengthened still more by the knowledge of their characters, and was easily heightened into love in riper years. Four years absence had rather animated than cooled his passion, and Jeronymo returned into the arms of his bride as faithful and as true as if he had never left her.

“The raptures of meeting were not yet over, and the preparations for the wedding were goingly briskly forward, when the bride-groom disappeared. He was accustomed frequently to spend the whole evening at a villa, which overlooked the sea, and sometimes to amuse himself with an excursion on the water. After an evening spent in this way it happened that he stayed away unusually long. Messengers were sent for him, boats went out to sea in search of him, no one could give the least information in relation to him; as none of his servants were missed, none could have accompanied him. Night came, and yet he was absent—morning, noon,—evening, yet no Jeronymo. They were about giving way to the most terrible conjectures, when they learned that an Algerine Corsair had landed upon the previous day, and made prisoners of several of the inhabitants. Two galleys were immediately equipped, having fortunately been in readiness to set sail; the old Marchese accompanied the first, determined to liberate his son or perish in the attempt. After a search of three days they discover the Corsair, and happily possess the advantage of the wind; they approach the enemy—they are now so near that Laurence, who is on the foremost galley, imagines he can recognize his brother on the deck of the Corsair,—when suddenly the wind changes—dark clouds appear in the horizon—a sudden storm overtakes them, and they are separated. The damaged vessels weather the storm, but when it again became fair, the expected prize is no where to be seen. The injuries they have sustained compel them to land at Malta. The affliction of the family knows no bounds. The disconsolate Marchese tears his hair when he reflects upon the danger to which the life of the young Countess is exposed.

“Five years have passed away in fruitless efforts to obtain information on the subject, inquiries are made along the coast which those pirates inhabit, an immense ransom is offered for the young Marchese, yet no claimant appears. The supposition forces itself upon their unwilling minds that the storm they had with difficulty weathered, had proved fatal to the pirates, whose vessel had been swallowed up by the raging waves.

"Plausible as this supposition appeared, all confidence of its certainty was wanting, and their hearts clung to the belief that the lost would yet appear before them. Should this hope not be gratified, the family became extinct, unless the younger brother renounced his profession and assumed the prerogatives of the first-born. However unjust this might be to the latter, it could not be exposed to the danger of becoming extinct by the scruples of the other.

"Sorrow and age had brought the venerable Marchese nearer to the grave. As each successive effort proved unavailing, hope departed from his bosom. He foresaw the fall of his house, unless prevented by the injustice to the lost one. To fulfil his obligation to the Count of C***ti, a name only must be altered, the end of both families was thus produced, whether the Countess Antonia became the bride of Laurence or Jeronymo. The bare *possibility* of the latter's reappearance, was not to be considered with the certain evil—the extinction of the family—and the old Marchese, aware of his approach to the grave, wished to die free from this trouble.

"The only and the most obstinate opponent of this course was he who would have gained the most by its adoption—Laurence himself; unaffected by the temptation of immense estates, indifferent to the possession of the most lovely creature, thus offered him—he generously refused to rob a brother, who might yet return to demand his patrimony. 'Is the fate of my dear Jeronymo,' said he, 'not terrible enough from this long captivity, but that I should embitter it still more by an act which would take from him that which he holds dearest? With what conscience could I pray to heaven for his return, when she who was to have been his wife was lying in my arms? With what countenance would I hasten to meet him, if by a miracle he should be brought back to us? And supposing that we are bereaved of him forever, whereby can we better honor his memory than by leaving the void in our family circle which his death has caused, for ever open?—than by sacrificing all our hopes upon his grave, and leaving untouched and sacred what ever belonged to him.

"But all the reasonings which the delicate kindness of a brother could invent were not able to reconcile the old Marchese to the idea of seeing a family extinguished which had already flourished for nine centuries. All that Laurence could obtain from him was a delay of two years before he should lead his brother's intended bride to the altar. During this interval the researches were continued most diligently. Laurence himself

made several voyages at sea, and exposed his person to many privations. No pains nor expense were spared to search for him who had so strangely disappeared. But these two years passed away in fruitless efforts as those which had preceded them had done."

"And the Countess Antonia?" asked the Prince, "you do not say any thing of her situation. Did she quietly submit to her fate? I cannot believe it."

"The situation of Antonia was one of dreadful conflict, between duty and affection, hatred and love. The disinterested generosity of brotherly love touched her; she felt herself forced to respect the man she could never love; torn by conflicting feelings her heart bled. But her aversion to the Chevalier seemed to grow in the same degree as his claims to respect increased. With deep concern he perceived the silent grief which wasted her youth. Tender compassion imperceptibly succeeded to the indifference with which he had hitherto regarded her; but this treacherous sentiment deceived him, and a stronger passion began to render difficult the exercise of a virtue hitherto unprejudiced. But even at the expense of love he listened to the suggestions of his generosity. He alone protected the unfortunate victim from the arbitrariness of the designs entertained by the family. But all his endeavours failed.—Every victory which he achieved over his passion only made him appear more worthy of her, and the generosity with which he refused her served only to take away every excuse for her refractoriness.

"This was the state of affairs when the Chevalier persuaded me to pay a visit at his country seat. The warm recommendation of my patron prepared for me there a reception which surpassed all my wishes. I ought not to forget to mention here that I had succeeded by some remarkable operations in making my name famous in all the lodges in the vicinity, which perhaps increased the confidence which the old Marchese had in me, and heightened his expectations in regard to me. How far I succeeded with him, and what means I employed, you will excuse me from relating; from the confessions I have already made, you can infer every thing which is necessary. Making use of all the mystical works which were in the library of the Marchese, which was a very considerable one, I intermixed my system of the occult science with the oddest devices, and was soon able to speak to him in his own language. In a short time he believed whatever I would, and would have as readily sworn to the wildest theory of mystical philosophy as to an article of the canon. Besides being very religious, and having cultivated in

this school his disposition to credulity to a high degree, my tales had so much the greater effect, and at last I had so entangled and entrapped him with mysticisms, that nothing natural was credible to him. In a short time I was almost worshipped by the whole house. The usual subjects of my lectures were the exaltation of human nature and the possibility of intercourse with higher beings,—my voucher, the infallible Count of Gabalís.—The young Countess, who since the loss of her lover had lived more in the spiritual than in the real world, and was moreover possessed of a great deal of melancholy of character, caught the hints which I threw out with eager delight. Even the servants of the house tried to find some business in the room when I spoke, to catch a word which they afterwards connected together after a fashion of their own.

“I had spent about two months in this manner at the country seat, when one morning the Chevalier entered my apartment. Deep sorrow was depicted on his countenance; all his features were disturbed. He threw himself into a chair with an air of desperation.

“‘Captain,’ he said, ‘it is all up with me. I must be off. I cannot stand it here any longer.’

“‘What is the matter with you, Chevalier? What ails you?’

“‘O! this terrible passion!’ (Here he rose with vehemence from the chair and threw himself into my arms,)—‘I have opposed it like a man. I can do so no longer.’

“‘But whose fault is it, dearest friend, but your own?—Is not every thing in your power? Father, family’—

“‘Father! family!—what are they to me? Do I want a hand obtained by force, or one gained by voluntary affection? Have I not a rival?—Ah! and whom? A rival perhaps among the dead! O! let me alone! let me alone! If it leads me to the end of the earth, I must find my brother?’

“‘What? after so many fruitless attempts can you still have hope?’

“‘Hope! In my very heart it died long since. But is it also dead in her heart?—Am I happy as long as a glimpse of hope gleams in Antonia’s heart? Two words my friend, could terminate my pain. But it is in vain. My fate will remain miserable until eternity breaks its long silence, and the graves give up their dead to testify for me.’

“‘Is it eternity alone that can make you happy?’

“‘Happy! O! I doubt whether I can ever be happy again!—But uncertainty is the most terrible condemnation!’ After some time passed in silence, his voice softened, and he continued

in a tone of sadness, 'Oh! that they might see my suffering! Can this faithful generosity which causes the misery of his brother render him happy? Shall a living man suffer on account of a dead one, who can never more enjoy himself? If he knew my anguish'—(here he began to weep violently, and pressed his face closely to my breast)—'yes, he would conduct himself to my arms.'

" 'But should this wish be quite impracticable?'

" 'My friend! what do you say?' He looked at me with a frightened air.'

" 'Much slighter reasons,' I continued, 'have interested the dead in the fate of the living. Should not the whole earthly happiness of a man—of a brother—'

" 'The whole earthly happiness! Oh! I feel that! How truly did you speak! My whole happiness!'

—" 'And the peace of a mourning family be a worthy summons? Surely if ever an affair of earth can give a right to disturb the rest of the dead—to make use of a power—'

" 'For God's sake, my friend,' the Chevalier interrupted me, 'no more of that?—Heretofore, I confessed I had such a thought—I think I told you of it—but I have long since rejected it as wrong and hateful.'

" 'You already perceive,' the Sicilian continued, 'to what all this tended. I endeavored to dispel the scruples of the Chevalier, in which I at last succeeded. It was determined that I should call up the spirit of the deceased, to do which I required the delay of a fortnight, to prepare myself worthily for the ceremony, as I pretended. At the expiration of this period, and after my paraphernalia was all prepared, I took advantage of a most dismal night, when the family were all assembled around me as they were accustomed, to obtain their consent, or rather to lead them imperceptibly on to request me of themselves to perform the conjuration. The consent of the young Countess, whose presence was so essential, was obtained with the greatest difficulty, but here the fanciful character of her passions came to our assistance, and perhaps also a faint gleam of hope that he who was supposed to be dead was still alive and would not appear at my summons. Distrust in the matter and doubts of my art, were the only impediments which I had not to oppose.'

" 'As soon as the consent of the family had been obtained, the third day succeeding was fixed upon for action. Prayers, which it was necessary to protract until midnight, fasting, watching, solitude and mystical instruction, together with the use of a certain instrument, the construction of which is yet a secret, and

which I have found very efficient under similar circumstances, were the preparations for the solemn act, which succeeded so much to my wish, that the fanatical inspiration of my pupils heated my own imagination and increased the illusion for which I had been laboring not a little. At last the expected hour came."

"I divine," exclaimed the Prince, "who you will introduce now. But go on—go on!"

"No, most gracious sir, the conjuration succeeded to our wishes."

"But how? What became of the Armenian?"

"Fear not," answered the Sicilian, "he will appear too soon."

"I need not enter into a description of the juggling, which would now require too much time. Enough that my expectations were accomplished. The old Marchese, the young Countess and her mother, the Chevalier and some other relatives were present. You can easily imagine that during the long time which I spent in this house no occasion was wanting to obtain the most accurate information of all that related to the deceased. Some pictures which I had discovered enabled me to give the apparition a most imposing resemblance. The deceased himself appeared in the dress of a barbarian slave,—with a deep wound upon his neck. You perceive," added the Sicilian, "that I departed here from the general conjecture, which had assigned to him a watery grave, because I had reason to hope that this unexpected turn would add not a little to the apparent authenticity of the vision, as on the contrary nothing appeared to me more dangerous than too close an adherence to the probable."

"I believe that your judgment in this particular was correct," the Prince said. "In a succession of extraordinary apparitions it appears to me that the probable must destroy the strength of the belief in the supernatural. The facility to comprehend what is discovered, causes the means by which it was obtained to be understood. If it were easy to have been invented, it would have been suspected, for why trouble a ghost, if nothing more were to be heard from it than was already known without its aid, by means of common sense alone. But the surprising novelty and difficulty of the discovery is here almost a warranty of its miraculous origin; for who will doubt that that is supernatural which could not be performed by natural means. But I have interrupted you," added the Prince. "Finish your tale."

The Sicilian continued: "I addressed the question to the ghost, whether he called nothing in this world his own—

whether there was nothing left which was dear to him? The apparition shook its head three times, and stretched out his hand towards Heaven. Before he vanished, he took from his finger a ring which was found lying on the floor after his disappearance. When the countess examined it closely, she found that it was her wedding ring!"

"Her wedding ring!" the Prince exclaimed with surprise,—"her wedding ring? But how did you obtain that?"

"I—I—it was not the genuine one, most gracious Prince—I had—it was only a counterfeit."

"A counterfeit!" the Prince repeated. "But you must have been in possession of the genuine to have obtained the counterfeit, and how did you get it, as the deceased certainly never took it from his finger?"

"That is true" said the Sicilian, with evident signs of confusion, "but from a description given to me of the genuine wedding ring—"

"Which who gave to you?"

"It was a long time since," said the Sicilian. "It was quite a simple golden ring, with the name of the young Countess I believe—but you have altogether confused me."

"What happened farther?" said the Prince with a very unsatisfied and equivocal air.

"They were now convinced that Jeronymo was no longer living. The family from this day made his death publicly known and formally mourned for him. The occurrence of the ring did not leave a doubt upon Antonia's mind, and also gave additional stress to the suit of the Chevalier. But from the impression which the apparition had made upon her, she fell violently ill, which had nearly frustrated the hopes of her lover forever. When she recovered, she insisted on taking the veil, which idea she abandoned only through the most pressing remonstrances of her confessor, in whom she placed implicit confidence. At last the endeavors of this man, and of the family, finally extorted from her her consent. The last day of mourning was to be the happy day, which the old Marchese intended to render still more memorable by resigning all his estates to the legitimate heir.

"This day came and Laurence received his trembling bride at the altar. The sun set. A splendid banquet waited for the joyful guests in the brightly illuminated wedding hall, and loud music accompanied the extravagant mirth. The happy old man had desired that every one should partake of his pleasure. Every avenue to the palace was thrown open, and all were welcome. Among this crowd—"

Here the Sicilian paused and a shudder of expectation stopped our breath.

"Among this crowd," he continued, "the person who sat next to me pointed out a Franciscan friar who was standing immovable as a pillar. He was very tall, of a lean and meagre appearance, and, with a countenance of ashy paleness, seriously and sorrowfully regarding the married couple. The joy which sat upon every countenance seemed to have passed him by,—his mien remained unalterably the same, like a statue among living figures. This extraordinary sight, which had the more effect upon me as it surprised me in the midst of pleasure, and contrasted so strongly with all that surrounded me at the moment, left an indelible impression on my mind, by which I was enabled to recognize the features of this monk in the physiognomy of the Russian, for he and your Armenian, are all one and the same individual, which would otherwise have been absolutely impossible. I endeavored to turn my eyes away from this fearful figure, but they involuntarily fell again upon it, and still its appearance changed not. I touched my neighbor, each touched his next friend. The same curiosity,—the same surprise ran round the whole table. The conversation ceased. A sudden, general silence ensued. The monk did not break it. He stood as before, immovable, with the same appearance, looking seriously and sorrowfully at the married pair. Every one was frightened at this apparition. The young Countess alone seemed to find her own sorrow reflected from the countenance of this stranger, and regarded with silent satisfaction the sole object in the assembly that appeared to understand or to participate in her grief. By degrees the crowd departed. Midnight had passed. The music began to die away. The lights began to burn dimly, and the conversation to be carried on in lower tones. The dimly lighted hall became more and more deserted. Still the monk stood immovable as before, looking seriously and sorrowfully at the young couple. Supper is over, the guests have dispersed and the family circle draws still closer together. Uninvited the monk remains in this narrowed circle. I do not know why it was, but no one seemed to wish to address him, and no one did so. Already the female acquaintances press around the trembling bride who turns a supplicating look upon the venerable stranger, as if soliciting his aid. In a similar manner the men collected about the bridegroom. An oppressive, expectant silence ensues. 'We are so happy together,' the old man at last commenced, who alone of us all

did not appear to perceive or wonder at the unknown. 'We are so happy together,' he said, 'and yet my son Jeronymo is not with us!'

"Have you invited him and did he not come?" the mask asked.

"It was the first time he had spoken and we all looked at him in silent horror.

"Ah, he is gone to that bourne from whence no traveller returns,' the old man replied. 'Reverend sir, you misunderstand me, my son Jeronymo is dead.'

"Perchance he is only afraid to appear in such company,' the monk continued, 'who knows how your son Jeronymo may look? Let him hear the voice which he last heard! Ask your son Laurence to call him!

"What does all this signify,' muttered we all to each other. Laurence changed color. I do not deny that my hair began to rise.

"The monk had meanwhile stepped to the cupboard, from which he took a full wine-glass and put it to his lips—"To the memory of our dear Jeronymo!" he exclaimed. 'Whoever loved the deceased let him follow my example.'

"Wherever you may come from, reverend sir,' the Marchese said, 'you have pronounced a name dear to us all. Be welcome. Come my friends,' turning towards us and handing round the glasses, 'let not a stranger put us to the blush! To the memory of my son Jeronymo!'

"Never I believe was toast drank in so bad a spirit.

"One full glass remains. Why does my son Laurence refuse to pledge himself in this drink of friendship?"

Tremblingly Laurence received the glass from the hand of the Franciscan,—tremblingly he put it to his lips,—'To my dearly beloved brother Jeronymo!' he stammered at last and shudderingly put it down.

"That is my murderer's voice,' exclaimed a horrid figure which appeared suddenly in our midst, with bloody clothes and disfigured by ghastly wounds.

"But do not ask me further," said the Sicilian, with evident signs of horror depicted on his countenance. "My senses, like those of all present, had left me from the moment that I placed my eyes upon that figure.—When our consciousness came back to us, Laurence was struggling in death. Monk and apparition had disappeared. The Chevalier was conveyed to bed in dreadful convulsions. No one save the ecclesiastic was suffered to approach the bed of the dying

youth, nor that of the miserable old man, who followed him in death a few weeks after. The avowals of the son were buried in the breast of the father, who heard his dying confessions. No man living has learnt them. Not long after this occurrence it became necessary to clear a well which was concealed among wild shrubs in a yard back of the country-seat, and which had been filled up with rubbish and disused for many years. When the rubbish was removed a skeleton was discovered. The house where this occurred is no longer standing. The family del M**te is extinct, and in a convent not far from Palermo Antonia's grave may be seen.

"You perceive now," continued the Sicilian, when he saw that we were all standing dumb and puzzled, and that no one spoke—"you perceive now, the origin of my knowledge of this Russian Officer, or this Franciscan friar, or this Armenian. Judge now whether I had not reason to tremble at a being who has twice thrown himself into my path in such a terrible manner."

"Answer me yet a single question," said the Prince, as he arose. "Have you been sincere in all the particulars of your tale concerning the Chavalier?"

"To my own knowledge—I have," replied the Sicilian.

"You really thought him then to be an honest man?"

"I swear that I did," answered the Sicilian.

"Even when he gave you the ring which you mentioned?"

"What?—He gave me no ring, I did not say that he gave me the ring."

"Well," said the Prince ringing the bell as he was about to depart. "And this ghost of the Marquis of Lanoy," he asked, returning again, "which this Russian caused to follow yours—do you take this to have been a true and real spirit?"

"I can take it for nothing else," the other answered.

"Come,"—said the Prince to us. The turnkey entered. "We are ready," said he to him. "You, sir," said he, turning to the Sicilian, "will hear from me again."

"The question most gracious sir, which you last proposed to the juggler, I would like to ask yourself," said I to the Prince, when we were again alone. "Do you think this second ghost to have been a true and genuine one?"

"I? No! by my faith,—I think so no more."

"No more? Then you did think so?"

"I do not deny that. I suffered myself to be led away

for a moment, to take a false show for something more real."

"And I should like to see the man," I exclaimed, "who, under similar circumstances, could restrain himself from a similar supposition. But what reasons have you now for changing your opinion? From what we have just heard of this Armenian, the faith in his wondrous power should have increased rather than abated."

"What a scoundrel has told us of him?" the Prince interrupted with eagerness,—"for I hope you doubt no longer that we have been dealing with such an one?"—

"No," said I, "but should his testimony on that account—"

"The testimony of a scoundrel—supposing I had no other reason to doubt it—cannot be compared with truth and common sense. A man who has deceived me several times, who has made deception his trade, does he deserve to be heard in a matter where to induce belief the most sincere love for truth must be apparent. Does such a man, who perhaps never spoke the truth for its own sake, deserve credit in a case where he appears as a witness against human reason and the eternal order of nature? That would be as unjust as to suffer a branded felon to impeach innocence unpolluted and unsuspected."

"But what reasons should he have for giving such testimony, in regard to a man whom he has so much cause, if not to hate, at least to fear?"

"Though I do not know what his reasons may be, shall I the less distrust him on that account? Do I know in whose pay he lied? I confess that I do not yet quite see through the whole web of his deception, but he served the cause in which he is engaged very badly by unmasking himself as an impostor, and perhaps as something worse."

The circumstance of the ring appears to be indeed a little suspicious."

"It is more than that," the Prince said, "It is decisive. This ring he got from the murderer, and he must have been certain at the same time that he was the murderer. Who but the murderer could have pulled a ring from the finger of the deceased, who certainly never voluntarily permitted it to be taken off. He tried to persuade us during the whole tale that he himself was deceived by the Chevalier, and that he had deceived him in turn. Why this trickery unless he perceived how much he would lose by acknowledging his under-

standing with the murderer? His whole tale is evidently nothing but a tissue of devices, to give an air of probability to the small proportion of truth which he saw fit to make use of. And should I hesitate to accuse a scoundrel whom I have caught in a dozen lies, rather than distrust the fundamental principles of nature, which in a single instance I have never found dissonant?"

"I cannot answer you that," said I, "but the apparition which we saw yesterday is nevertheless still incomprehensible to me."

"To me also," replied the Prince, "although I have been tempted to find a key to its explanation."

"How?" said I.

"Do you not recollect that the second figure, when it had entered, moved towards the altar, caught the crucifix in his hand and stepped upon the carpet?"

"So it appeared to me. Yes."

"And this crucifix, the Sicilian told us was a conductor. You perceive, therefore, that it hastened to make itself electrical. The blow which Lord Seymour dealt to it with the sword must therefore have been ineffectual, because the electrical shock maimed his sword arm."

"As far as the sword is concerned, this may be correct. But what explanation do you give concerning the ball which the Sicilian fired at the figure and which we heard rolling upon the altar?"

"Do you know certainly that it was the discharged ball which we heard rolling? Not to mention that the puppet, or the man who represented the ghost might have been clad so perfectly in armor as to be both shot and sword proof—just reflect for a moment who charged the pistols."

"True," said I, and a sudden light broke upon my mind. "The Russian charged them. But this was done before our eyes—how could a fraud be perpetrated there?"

"And why not? Did you then mistrust this man, so that you would have considered it necessary to watch him. Did you examine the ball which he put into the pistol, which might as well have been made of quicksilver, or even of painted clay? Did you notice whether he really put it into the pistol or whether he did not let it fall into his hand? What convinces you—supposing he had charged it with a bullet—that he took the charged pistol with him into the other pavilion, and did not rather substitute another pair, which he could have easily have done, as no one thought of watching him; and besides we were

occupied in undressing? And could not the figure, at the moment when the smoke of the powder hid it from our view, let another bullet fall upon the altar, with which he might have been provided in case of necessity? Which of all these cases is impossible?"

"You are right. But this striking resemblance to your deceased friend—I often saw him with you, and I at once recognized his features in those of the ghost."

"And I also,—and I must confess that the illusion was extremely perfect. But if this Sicilian, after a few glances which he threw on my snuff-box, could produce a resemblance in his picture which deceived both you and me, why would not the Russian—who had during the whole time we were at table, the free use of my snuff-box, and who, moreover, had the advantage of always remaining unobserved, and to whom I had also discovered in confidence whose picture was upon the snuff-box,—have done this the more easily. Add to this—which the Sicilian also observed—that there was nothing characteristic in the features of the Marquis which might not be roughly imitated—what then remains inexplicable in the whole apparition?"

"But the import of his words! The disclosure concerning your friend?"

"What? Did not the Sicilian tell us that from the little which he had gleaned from me, he had concocted a similar story? Does not that prove how natural this invention was? The answers of the ghost were besides so oracularly obscure, that there was not the least danger of a contradiction. Supposing that the creature of the juggler, who represented the ghost, had possessed sufficient sagacity and presence of mind, and was well enough informed of the circumstances—how far might not the deception have been carried?"

"But consider, most gracious sir, how ample the preparations for such a complicated fraud on the part of the Armenian must have been. How much time would have been required for it? How much time only to copy so truly one human head from another, as is here supposed? How much time to instruct this substituted ghost in such a manner as to guard against gross mistakes! How much attention the numerous slight unmentionable additional circumstances would have required, which either was to assist or had to be guarded against, lest they might interrupt the deception! And now consider that the Russian was not absent for more than half an hour. Could all be arranged which was indispensably necessary within this short time? Indeed, most gracious sir, not even a dramatic author,

mystified with the three inexorable unities of his Aristotle, would have loaded an interlude with so much action, nor expected such a quantity of gullibility shown by the pit."

"What? You think then that it is absolutely impossible that in this short half hour all these preparations could have been made."

"In fact," I exclaimed, "I consider it next to impossible."

"This phrase I do not understand. Does it contradict all the laws of time, space and physical effects, that such a dexterous fellow as this Armenian undoubtedly is, with the assistance perhaps of creatures quite as dexterous, supplied with every thing necessary, from which a man of his profession will not separate himself—that such a man, favored by such circumstances, could achieve so much in so short a time?—Is it inconceivable and absurd to believe that he could give ample directions to his accomplices by means of a few words, commands, or hints,—that he could direct prolix and difficult operations with the use of few words? And can any thing else but an evident impossibility be set up against the eternal laws of nature? Will you then rather believe a miracle than allow an improbability?—Rather overthrow the powers of nature, than be satisfied with an artificial and less common combination of these powers?"

"Though the matter does not justify so bold an inference, you must admit that it is far beyond our comprehension."

"I had almost a mind to dispute that," said the Prince, with roguish vivacity.—"Supposing, my dear Count, that not only hurriedly and superficially during this half hour, but also during the whole evening and night, they had worked for this Armenian? Consider that the Sicilian was full three hours engaged in making his preparations."

"The Sicilian! most gracious sir."

"And how will you prove that the Sicilian had not as much interest in the second spectre as the first?"

"What! Most gracious sir!"

"That he was not the principal accomplice of the Armenian—in short that both do not conceal themselves behind the same veil?"

"That might be difficult to prove," I exclaimed, not a little surprised.

"Not so difficult, dearest Count, as you imagine. What! Is it a mere accident that these two men should meet at the same time and place, intent upon such a strange complicated design upon the same person—that there exists in the opera-

tions of both such a striking harmony—such an evidently premeditated understanding, that one almost worked into the hands of the other. Suppose he had used the coarser trickery as a contrast to the more scientific legerdemain which he reserved for himself. He created a Hector in order that he might be the Achilles. Suppose that he had sent the former in advance to learn the degree of faith upon which he might calculate, to find out the means of access to my confidence, to familiarize himself with his subject by this experiment, which even if it failed would not prejudice his other plan, in short to prove fully the instrument upon which he intended to play. Suppose that he had done all this by calling my attention to one direction and keeping it awake, to lull it into sleep in another, which was more important to himself. Suppose that he had wished to make some inquiries which he wished to have charged against the juggler in order to remove suspicion from the main trick.”

“How do you mean?”

“Let us suppose he had bribed one of my servants, in order to obtain through him certain information—perhaps even documents—which might serve his purpose. I miss my huntsman. What should hinder me from believing that the Armenian is concerned in the absconding of this man? But an accident may happen by which I may become informed of all his artifices. A letter may be interrupted, or a servant may babble. His whole importance sinks at once if I discover the sources of his omniscience. He therefore introduces this juggler, who must have this or that design upon me. Of the existence and intentions of this man, he fails not to give me hint in time. Whatever, therefore, I may discover, my suspicions will fall on none but this juggler, and the inquiries, of which the Armenian has all the benefit, are to be attributed to the Sicilian. This was the puppet with which he permitted me to play, while unobserved and unsuspected, he draws around me invisible cords.”

“Very well; but how does it agree with these intentions that he himself assists in destroying this illusion, and exposes the secrets of his art to profane eyes?”

“What secrets are they which he exposes to me? Certainly none of those with which he intends to practice upon me. He, therefore, has lost nothing by their being made known. But on the contrary, how much has he gained if this supposed triumph over fraud and jugglery makes me secure and confident—if he thereby succeed in turning my watch-

fulness in another direction, and fixing definitely my rambling suspicions upon objects most remote from the real place of attack? He would expect that earlier or later, either of my own accord, or from the suggestion of others, I would seek for the key of his wonders in the arts of legerdemain. What better could he do than he has done? By placing the two tricks as it were in contact with each other, and giving me the key to the one to which he has set the artificial limits, he has heightened and confounded my conceptions of the latter. How many conjectures did he at once cut off by this artifice? How many forms of interpretation has he confuted in advance, that might perhaps have afterwards suggested themselves to my mind?"

"Then he has at least acted very much against his own interest, inasmuch as he has opened the eyes of those whom he wished to deceive, and upon the whole has abated their belief in his wonder-working power by exposing an artificial fraud of this character. You are yourself, most gracious sir, the best confutation of the plan, if indeed he ever had one."

"He was perhaps mistaken in me, but he has not reasoned any the less sagaciously for that. Could he have foreseen that just so much would have remained in my memory as would become a key to the miracle! Was it a part of his plan that the creature whom he employed should expose himself to me in the manner which he has done? Do we know that this Sicilian has not far overstepped his commission? With the ring certainly he did, and it is chiefly this circumstance which has caused me to distrust this man. How easily might such a nicely combined plan be marred by the bungling of an assistant. It certainly was not his intention that the juggler should trumpet his praise to us in the language of a mountebank—that he should dish up such tales as would upon the least reflection bear their own refutation upon their face. As for instance, with what expectation of belief could this charlatan assert that this performer of miracles was obliged, at the twelfth hour of night, to quit all intercourse with men? Have we not seen him ourselves in our midst at that hour?"

"That is true," I exclaimed, "he must have forgotten that!"

"But it is characteristic of this kind of people, that they exaggerate and over-do what is committed to them to perform, and thereby impair what an unpretending and legitimate deception would have rendered excellent."

"Still I cannot persuade myself, most gracious sir, to con-

sider this matter as nothing but a contrived game. What? was the fright of the Sicilian, the convulsions, the swoon, the whole miserable condition of this man, which so excited our compassion,—was all this but an acted part, which had previously been committed to memory?—Allowing that acting could be carried to such perfection, still the actor cannot command the vital organs.”

“As to that, my friend—I have seen Garrick’s Richard the Third. And were we cool and collected enough at the time to be unbiased observers? Could we examine into the affections of this man when we were over-mastered by our own? Besides, the decided point even of a deception is a matter of so much importance to the deceiver himself, that with him expectation could easily produce effect similar to surprise and astonishment with the deceived. Add to this the unexpected appearance of the bum-bailiffs.”—

“Exactly, most gracious sir, I am glad that you reminded me of it. Would he have voluntarily risked the laying bare of such a scheme to the eye of justice? Would he have put the fidelity of his creature to such a dubious test? And for what end?”

“Let him see to that. He knows his people. Do you know what secret crimes are security to him for this man’s silence? You have heard what office he holds in Venice. How much will it cost to help the fellow through, who has no other accuser but himself?”

(And in fact the result but too truly justified the suspicion of the Prince on this point. When we sent for information concerning our prisoner some days after, we received for an answer, that he was not to be seen.)

“And do you ask for what purpose? In what other than this probable way could we have demanded from the Sicilian such an improbable and disgraceful confession, upon which nevertheless, so much depended? Who, but a desperate man who has nothing more to lose, could resolve upon making such humiliating disclosures concerning himself? Under what other circumstances would we have believed him.”

“Granted, most gracious Prince,” said I at length. Both apparitions must have been the result of juggling; the Sicilian, for all I care, shall have told us but a story which his principle made him learn, let it be that both had agreed to work for the same end, and on the ground of this agreement all these strange occurrences which, in the course of this adventure, have surprised us shall be explained. That prophe-

cy on the Place of St. Mark, the first miracle, which has opened the way for the others, remains still unexplained, and of what use is a key to all the others if we despair of a solution to this one also?"

"Reverse rather your proposition," the Prince answered me. "Tell me, what do all these miracles prove, if I find among them a single trick of jugglery? That prophecy, I confess to you, is beyond my comprehension. Were it standing alone, or had the Armenian with it concluded as well as opened his scheme—I avow I do not know how far it might have led me, but found as it is, in bad company, it seems to me to be a little suspicious. Time will perhaps explain it,—but believe me, my friend," laying his hand on my own and assuming a serious air, "a man who can command the higher power will have no need of jugglery—he will despise it."

So ended a conversation which I have here given at length, because it shows the difficulties which it was necessary to overcome with the Prince; and because it, as I hope, will clear his memory of the reproach that he fell blindly and weakly into the snare, which a devilish spirit, before unheard of, had prepared for him. "Not all," the Count of O—— continues, "who perhaps at the moment when I write this, look down scornfully upon his weakness, and in the proud self conceit of a never tempted reason think themselves entitled to break the rod of condemnation over his back—not all these, I fear, would have stood this first trial so manfully. If nevertheless, after this fortunate commencement, you see him fall, if you find the design, against the most remote approach of which his good genius warned him, accomplished, you will scoff less at his follies, but wonder at the enormity of the villainy, to which reason, strongly fortified, at last yielded. Worldly considerations can have no bearing upon my testimony, for he who should thank me for it is no more.—His terrible fate is ended. His spirit has long since been purified at the throne of Eternal Truth, before which my soul will also stand when the world reads this narrative. But forgive the tear which involuntarily drops to the memory of my dearest friend,—yet in compliance with the demands of justice, I write it down. He was a noble man, and would certainly have been an ornament to the throne, which, in his delusion, he desired to ascend by the stepping-stone of crime.

PART II.

"Not long after these latter occurrences," the Count de O— continues to relate, "I began to perceive an important alteration in the mind of the Prince, which was partly a consequence of what had lately occurred, and partly produced by the conflux of several accidental circumstances. For until now the Prince had avoided a closer examination of his faith, and contented himself with purifying the rough conceptions of religion wherein he was educated, by the better ideas on the subject which he afterwards acquired, or else to balance the worse with the better without examining the fundamental principles of his faith. Religious subjects in general, he at several times avowed to me, had always appeared to him like an enchanted castle into which no one would place his foot without fear, and one would do far better to pass it by at a respectful distance, without exposing himself to the danger of being lost in its labyrinths. A bigoted education was the cause of his fear, which had impressed upon his mind at a tender age a sort of bugbear from which he could not rid himself during his whole life. Religious melancholy was an hereditary complaint in his family; the education which himself and his brothers had received, had increased their tendency to it; the men to whom it had been entrusted had been selected with this view, and were therefore fanatics or hypocrites. To suppress all the vivacity in the boys' minds by a strict restraint was the only means to give the greatest satisfaction to their princely parents. The whole youth of our Prince was, as it were, a dark vision. Even from his sports, joy was banished. All his conceptions of religion were of a dreadful character, and it was the trouble which first gained possession of his mind, and maintained itself there longest. His god was a frightful and rigorous being, his worship of him a servile fear, or a blind submission which suppressed all energy and intrepidity of character. In all his boyish and youthful inclinations, to which a strong body and vigorous health gave the more energetic impulses, religion stood in his way. It was in conflict with all to which his youthful heart adhered. He never learned to view it as a regulator, but as a scourge of his passions. In this way a silent disgust to it arose by degrees in his heart, which made a most singular compound between respectful faith and blind awe in his character. He had as it were a grudge against a master before

whom he trembled. No wonder that he took the first opportunity to throw off a yoke which was so difficult to be borne. He escaped from it like a bond slave from his master, who, even in the midst of liberty, carries with him the feelings of his servitude. Because he had not renounced the faith of his youth with a calm choice—because he had not waited until his riper intellect had gently disengaged himself from it—because he had escaped as a fugitive upon whom his master's rights of possession still continue—he was forced to return to it. He had escaped with the chain upon him, and for that very reason he became the prey of every impostor who discovered it, and knew how to make use of it. That there was such an one, the sequel of this tale will show, if indeed it is not already understood.

“The confessions of the Sicilian had caused more important effects on his mind than the whole matter was worth, and the trifling victory which he had gained over this weak illusion, had sensibly increased the assurance which he placed upon his own understanding. The ease with which he had succeeded in unveiling this imposition, appeared to have surprised him. In his head, truth and error were so perfectly separated from each other, that it did not often happen that he confounded the support of the one with the support of the other, and for that reason the stroke which destroyed his belief in miracles, had made the whole empire of his religious belief to totter. It happened to him as to an inexperienced man, who deceived in friendship or love in a single instance, suffers his belief in those sentiments in general to abate, because he has once made a bad choice, taking mere accidents for essentials. A fraud unmasked made truth itself suspicious to him, because he had unfortunately proved the truth of his own mind by reasoning equally bad.

“This presumptive triumph pleased him so much the more, inasmuch as the state of mind from which it had delivered him had been grievously oppressive. From this period a scepticism was stirring in his mind from which that which was most deserving of veneration was not exempt.

“Several things combined to keep him in this state of mind and to fortify him still more therein. The retirement in which he had until then been living ceased, and gave way to a life of pleasure. His rank was discovered. Attentions—which he had to reciprocate,—etiquette which he owed to his rank, drew him imperceptibly into the whirlpool of the great world.

“His rank as well as his qualifications gave him access to the most intelligent circles in Venice. He was soon in intimate

acquaintance with the brightest ornaments of the Republic, scholars as well as diplomatists. This obliged him to break through the monotonous narrow circle, to which his mind had hitherto been confined. He began to feel that his ideas were too limited, that there was something wanting, that he had need of a more general and perfect education than he possessed. The old fashioned character of his mind, of whatever brilliant endowments it was possessed stood in prejudicial contrast with current notions of society, and his ignorance of those countries with which others were most familiar exposed him sometimes to ridicule, and nothing did he fear so much as this. The unfavorable prejudice which existed against his native country, he regarded in the light of a challenge, which he was obliged to meet in his own person and refute. At the same time he had this singular feature in his character, that any attentions for which he thought himself indebted to his rank and not his personal worth, always displeased him. He was particularly sensible of this kind of humiliation, in the presence of such persons as attracted attention from their superior intelligence, and, as it were, triumphed over their birth by personal merit. To be distinguished as a prince in such society, was always mortifying to him, because unfortunately he conceived himself to be shut out by his birth from all competition with them. All this taken together convinced him of the necessity of giving to his mind that education which had hitherto been neglected, in order to overtake the world of thought with which he was twenty years behind. For this purpose he selected the most modern writings, which he read with all that assiduity with which he was accustomed to devote himself to everything which he undertook. But the evil hand that was interested in the selection of those writings unfortunately caused such works to be thrown in his way, that his reason and his heart were little benefitted. And even here his favorite propensity prevailed, which had always drawn him with irresistible charms towards every thing which was intended to be mysterious. He had attention and memory only for that which related to others; his reason and heart remained vacant, and his brain was at the same time filled to a great degree with a mass of confused ideas. The dazzling style of one author charmed his imagination, and the subtlety of another entangled his reason. It was an easy matter to subdue a mind which was a spoil to every one who gained a certain degree of confidence with him. One year's passionate devotion to reading had not enriched his mind

with any beneficial ideas, but on the contrary had filled his head with doubts, which, as the infallible result of the peculiar cast of his character, unfortunately found their way to his heart. In short, he had entered the labyrinth as a fanatic full of faith, and had left it as a sceptic, and at last as a declared free-thinker.

“ Among the circles in which he moved, there was a certain secret society called the Bucentauro, which, under the external appearance of a noble and reasonable liberty of mind, covered the most dissolute licentiousness of opinions and morals. Many ecclesiastics being counted among its members, and even some cardinals being at the head of it, the Prince was so much the more easily persuaded to be initiated. Certain dangerous truths of reason he thought could not be better kept than in the hands of such persons, whose station in society obliged them to be moderate, and who had the advantage of having already examined the principles of all the opposing parties. The Prince forgot here that mental and moral libertinism spreads farther with persons in these stations, because, forsooth, they are less restricted. And this was the case in the Bucentauro, the greater part of the members of which degraded not only their station, but humanity itself, by a species of philosophy worthy of all condemnation, and by morals worthy of such a guide. The society had its several degrees, and, for the honor of the Prince, I am willing to believe that he was never introduced to the inner sanctuary. Every one who entered this society, was obliged, at least as long as he visited it, to lay aside his rank, his nation, his religious creed,—in short—all conventional marks of distinction, and to enter into a certain state of universal equality. The choice of members was severely select, because mental acquirements alone opened the way to it. The society boasted of the greatest politeness and of the most cultivated taste, and this character was in fact given to it throughout all Venice. This, as well as the appearance of equality which existed, irresistibly attracted the Prince. A spirited intercourse, cheered by refined wit, instructive conversation, and the society of the choicest spirits of the learned and political world, concealed from him for a long time the danger of the alliance which he had formed. When by degrees the spirit of the institution became more apparent to him, through the mask which had been thrown over it, or when perhaps the members were tired of restraining themselves in his presence, the return was dangerous, and false shame, as well as care for his personal safety,

compelled him to conceal his secret dislike. But already by his intimacy with this class of men and with their sentiments, though they could not entice him to imitate them, the pure and beautiful simplicity of his character and the tenderness of his moral feelings were lost. His reason, supported by so little solid knowledge, could not solve the refined sophisms in which it was entangled, without other assistance, and this dreadful corrosive had imperceptibly destroyed nearly the whole foundation upon which his morality should have rested. The natural and necessary support of his happiness he threw away for sophisms which failed him at the decisive moment, and thereby forced him to join hands with the first person who might chance to be thrown in his path.

“The hand of a friend might perhaps have succeeded in drawing him in time from this precipice,—but, besides that I became acquainted with the true character of the Bucentauro long after the evil had happened, an accident had obliged me to leave Venice at the commencement of the period of which I am speaking. Lord Seymour also, a valuable acquaintance of the Prince, whose cool head was inaccessible to any kind of deception, and who undoubtedly would have served him as a certain support, left us at this time to return to his native country. Those in whose hands I left the Prince were honest but inexperienced men,—very limited in their ideas of religion—who lacked ability to discern evil, as well as influence with the Prince. To his captious sophisms they had nothing to oppose but the set sentiments of a blind unexamined faith, which either offended or amused him. He overlooked them too easily, and his superior reason soon silenced these bad defenders of a good cause, as an example which I shall hereafter relate will prove. The others who afterwards obtained his confidence, were, on the contrary, interested to sink him still deeper into the mire. When I returned to Venice the next year, how changed did I find every thing!

“The influence of this new philosophy soon became manifest in the life of the Prince. The more apparent the success with which he met in Venice, the more he began to lose with his old friends. He pleased me less and less from day to day. We saw each other but seldom, as in general he was but little at leisure. The current of the great world had caught him. His threshold was never empty when he was at home. One amusement, one feast, one pleasure pressed upon another. He was the beauty whom all courted—the king and the idol of all cir-

cles. As difficult as he had imagined to himself the great course of the world to be, in the former tranquillity of his confined life, he was surprised to find it so easy. Every one anticipated his desires, all that came from his lips was excellent, and when he was silent it was a loss to the company. They understood the art to draw out his thoughts, as it were, with an agreeable ease, and to cause him to surprise himself by lending him a helping hand. The fortune which followed him everywhere, his general success, actually made him something more than what he really was—it inspired him with confidence in himself. The higher opinion of his own worth which he thereby acquired, made him think that this almost idolatrous attention was a tribute to his genius, which, without this great and to some degree well founded self-esteem, would as a matter of course become suspicious to him. But now the general voice was only a confirmation of what a self-conceited pride silently told him—a tribute which belonged to him of right. He would infallibly have escaped this snare, had he had time to breathe—had quiet been allowed him to compare his own actual worth with the picture which was held before him in such a beautiful mirror. But his existence was a continued state of intoxication and suspense. The higher he was placed, the more difficult he found it to preserve his elevation; this continued tension of thought consumed him slowly; even in his sleep he had no rest. His foibles were marked, and the passions which were kindled within him well calculated upon.

“His honest cavaliers soon had to suffer, because their master had become a great genius. Serious sentiments and time honored truths, to which his heart had formerly clung with much warmth, began now to become objects of scorn. He avenged himself upon the truths of religion for the oppression under which he had so long been held by false conceptions; but because a voice in his heart which was not to be led by sophistry, opposed these fancies, there was more of bitterness than of vivacity in his wit. His temper began to change. Humors made their appearance. The fairest ornament of his character, modesty, disappeared. Flatterers had poisoned his excellent heart. The forbearing delicacy in his intercourse with others, which formerly had caused his cavaliers to forget that he was their master, now frequently gave room to a commanding decisive tone, which pained the more sensibly, because it was not founded upon extreme differences, for which one consoles himself with little trouble and upon which he values himself but

slightly—but upon an offensive supposition of his personal superiority. His own people seldom saw him in any other state than a morose, peevish and unhappy one; he animated strange circles with forced gaiety. We saw him walk this dangerous path with sympathizing grief; but in the tumult he passed on regardless of the tender voice of friendship, for he was yet too happy to understand it.

“At the beginning of this epoch, important business which I could not postpone for the most ardent feelings of friendship, summoned me to the court of my sovereign. An invisible hand, which I discovered only long afterwards, had found means to confound my affairs there, and spread reports concerning me, which I was obliged to hasten to refute by my presence. To leave the Prince was painful to me, but to him the separation was easy. The ties had long been loosened which had bound him to me. But his fate had awakened all my sympathy,—I therefore made the Baron de F—— promise to give me every information concerning him by letter, which promise he conscientiously and faithfully fulfilled. I am therefore for a long period no more an eye-witness of these adventures—may it be permitted to me to present the Baron de F—— in lieu of myself, and fill the intervening space by extracts from his letters. Although my friend’s manner of representation does not always correspond with my own, I do not wish to alter the phraseology. The reader will easily gather the truth from them.

LETTER I.

BARON DE F—— TO THE COUNT DE O——.

May 17, 18—.

“I thank you, my esteemed friend, for giving me permission to continue in your absence the familiar intercourse, which was my greatest pleasure during your presence with us. You are aware that there is no one here with whom I could venture to speak on certain subjects. Whatever you have to say against it, these people are hateful to me. Since the Prince is one of them, and moreover you have left us, I am forsaken in this populous city. Z—— takes it easier, and the fair in Venice know how to make him forget the mortification which he has to share with me at home. And why

should he grieve about it? He sees and expects in the Prince nothing but a master which he finds every where—but I—you know how much I take the weal and woe of the Prince to heart, and how much reason I have for it. Sixteen years have now passed that I have lived about his person—that I have lived for him alone. As a boy of nine years of age I entered his service, and since that time fate has not separated me from him. I was raised under his eye; a long intercourse has adapted my character to his; all his adventures, great and small, I have achieved with him. In his happiness I have lived. Until this unfortunate year I have only regarded him as my friend, as my elder brother; I have been as in a clear sunshine, in his eyes. No cloud darkened my happiness—and now all is to be destroyed in this fatal Venice!

“Since you have left us many things have changed. The Prince of D—— arrived last week with a numerous and brilliant retinue, and has given to our circle a new impetus of life. As he and our Prince are near relations, and at present on tolerably good terms, they will be little separated from each other during his stay here, which, as I understand, will last until Ascension day. His entree was a most splendid one. For ten days the Prince has had scarcely time to breathe. At the outset the Prince of D—— commenced living in great style, and well he may, for he will shortly leave Venice; but the attending evil is that he has corrupted our Prince, who could not well exclude himself, on account of the particular relation existing between the two houses, and he also thought it due to the departed rank of his own house to make himself prominent. The time for our departure from Venice approaches, and a few weeks will relieve him from this continued heavy expense.

“The Prince of D——, it is said, is here on business for the * * * * order, and imagines that he plays a great game. You will easily presume that he immediately took possession of all the acquaintances of the Prince. In the Bucentauro especially he was introduced with pomp,—it having pleased him for some time to appear as a wit and a free-thinker, and in his correspondence, which he maintains with persons in all parts of the world, he is styled the ‘Philosopher Prince.’ I do not know whether you have ever had the pleasure of having seen him. A prepossessing exterior, watchful eyes, a mien evincing knowledge of every art, a show of much

reading, much acquired nature (allow me the expression) and a princely condescension to human feelings, besides a bold assurance, and an eloquence which overcomes all opposition, are his most marked characteristics. Who could refuse his homage to such shining qualities in a Royal Highness? In the meantime, how the silent and solid worth of our Prince will get along, near his brilliant excellency, time will determine.

"In our arrangements many and material alterations have been made. We have moved into a new and splendid mansion opposite the new hotel of the procurators, because the Moor became too contracted for the Prince. Our suite is increased by the addition of twelve persons, such as pages, Moors, &c. Every thing goes forward now with grandeur. When you were here you used to complain of expense. You ought to see us now!

"Our domestic relations are still the same, except that the Prince, no longer kept in bounds by your presence, has, if possible, become more monosyllabic and cold. We are seldom in his presence except at times of dressing and undressing. Under the pretence that we speak French badly and Italian not at all, he excludes us from most of his parties, which hurts me personally very little; but I believe the real truth of the matter is, he is ashamed of us, and that gives me pain, because I know that I do not deserve it.

"Of our servants (as I suppose every trifle will interest you) he employs Biondello almost solely, whom, as you will recollect, he took into his service after the absconding of our huntsman, and who now, by this new mode of life, has become indispensable to him. This man knows every thing in Venice, and knows how to make use of every thing. It appears as if he could employ a thousand eyes and a thousand hands. He says he effects this by means of the assistance of the gondolier. He is of great service to the Prince, as he makes him acquainted with all new faces which he meets at parties, and the private information which he gives the Prince has always found to be correct. At the same time he understands the French and Italian perfectly, and on this account the Prince has promoted him to be his secretary. I cannot but tell you an instance of disinterested fidelity, such as is rare indeed to be found in a man in his station. A creditable merchant of Rimini lately asked an audience of the Prince. The object was to make a singular complaint against

Biondello. The procurator, his former master, who may for aught I know have been cracked, had been living in irreconcilable enmity with his relations, and desired if possible that his hatred of them should outlive himself. Biondello was his exclusive confidant, with whom he generally intrusted all his secrets. On his master's death-bed he had solemnly vowed to him to keep them faithfully, and never to make use of them for the advantage of his relatives. A considerable legacy was to reward him for this silence. When his will was opened and the papers examined, blanks and confused sentences were found which Biondello alone could explain. He denied obstinately that he knew anything about the matter, left the large legacy intended for himself to the heirs, and kept his own secrets. Large offers were made to him by the relations, but all in vain. At last to escape from their importunity, because they threatened to bring an action against him, he entered the service of the Prince. To him the principal heir, this merchant, now applied, and made still greater offers than those he had previously made, if Biondello would change his mind. But even the intercession of the Prince was in vain. He confessed to him that he really was intrusted with such secrets, and did not deny that the deceased carried his hatred against his relatives too far, but he added, 'he was a good master and my benefactor, and he died in full confidence in my probity. I was the only friend whom he left in the world—the less dare I disappoint his only hope.' He also gave him to understand that these disclosures would not be much to the honor of his deceased master. Was it not a fine and noble spirit? You may easily imagine that the Prince did not long persist in the attempts to make him waver in such praiseworthy determinations. This rare faithfulness to one who was dead, which he proved that he possessed, has won for him the esteem of one who is living.

"May you be happy—dearest friend. How I long to return to the quiet life in which you found us and for which your company recompensed us so agreeably. I fear that my time of enjoyment in Venice is passed, and am much mistaken if the same is not true of the Prince. The element in which he moves at present, is not the one to make him happy for any length of time, or else an experience of sixteen years deceives me.

LETTER II.

BARON DE F—— TO THE COUNT DE O——.

May 18—, 18—.

I really would never have supposed that our stay in Venice would have been of any use, but it has been the means of saving a man's life. I am therefore reconciled to it.

"A short time since, the Prince was carried home late at night from the Bucentauro. Biondello and another servant attended him. I do not know how it happened, but before he had proceeded far, the chair, which in the hurry was taken without choice, broke, and the Prince was obliged to proceed the remainder of the way on foot. Biondello walked before him; the road led through some dark and remote streets, and as it was not far from the break of day the lamps burned dimly, or had already been partly extinguished. They might have proceeded for a quarter of an hour, when Biondello discovered that they had gone the wrong way. The resemblance of the bridges had deceived him, and instead of crossing at St. Marks, they found themselves in the Sestiere of Costello. They were in one of the most remote lanes of the city, and nothing living was to be seen far or near. They had to turn back into one of the principal streets in order to set themselves right. They had proceeded but a few paces when they heard the cry of murder not far off, in a lane. The Prince being unarmed took a cane from the hands of a servant, and hastened with a determined mind towards the spot whence the cries proceeded. Three desperate looking men were in the act of stabbing a fourth, who, with his attendant were making but a feeble resistance. The Prince made his appearance just in time to prevent the fatal blow. His outcry and that of his attendants perplexed the murderers, who had not calculated upon a surprise in so remote a place, and they left their man after a few slight stabs, and retreated. Half fainting and exhausted with the struggle, the wounded man fell into the arms of the Prince. His attendant disclosed to him that he had saved the life of the Marchese of Civitella, the nephew of the Cardinal A——i. As the Marchese had lost much blood, Biondello hastily acted as surgeon as well as he could, and the Prince took care that

he was carried to the palace of his uncle, to which he accompanied him. Here he left him without making himself known. But he was betrayed by a servant who recognized Biondello. On the next morning the Cardinal, an old acquaintance from the Bucentauro, appeared. The Cardinal was much affected. When he left, tears were in his eyes. The Prince also was touched. On the same evening a visit was paid to the sick man, of whose recovery, however, the surgeon gave the best assurances. The cloak in which he had been wrapped had rendered the stabs uncertain and broke their force. Since this accident not a day has passed that the Prince has not either received visits from or paid them to the house of the Cardinal, and a strong friendship began to be formed between them.

"The Cardinal is a venerable Sexagenarian, of a majestic mien, and full of serenity and robust health. He is considered to be one of the richest prelates in the whole territory of the republic. It is said that he manages his immense fortune as if he was yet in the vigor of youth, and, with a reasonable frugality, he disdains no earthly enjoyment. This nephew, who, however, does not live on the best terms with his uncle, is his only heir. Though the old man is not an enemy to pleasure, yet the conduct of the nephew, it is said, would exhaust the greatest tolerance. His free principles and licentious manner of life, unfortunately aided by all that can adorn vice and charm the senses, make him the terror of all fathers and the curse of all husbands. This last attack, too, it is openly asserted, he drew upon himself by an intrigue with the lady of the ———ian Ambassador. This is bad, not to mention other affairs, from the consequences of which he was with difficulty saved by the influence and money of the Cardinal. With the above exception, the latter would be the most enviable man in all Italy, because he is in possession of all that can make life desirable. This single spot in his family fortune recalls all its favors and embitters the enjoyment of his riches by the constant fear of having no heir.

"All this information I got from Biondello. In this man the Prince has got a real treasure. Every day he makes himself more indispensable—every day we discover in him some new talent. The Prince had lately overheated himself and could not sleep. The night candle was extinguished, and no ringing of the bell could awaken the servant, who

had gone to sleep in another house. The Prince therefore concluded to arise and call one of his servants. He had not proceeded far from his room when he heard the strains of sweet music. Enchanted, he followed the sound and found Biondello in his room, playing on the flute with his comrades about him. He would not trust his eyes or his ears, but desired him to continue playing. With admirable ease he extemporaneously played the same melting idagio with most happy variations, and all the elegance of a virtuoso. The Prince, whom you know, is a connoisseur in such matters, asserts that he might confidently perform in the best chapel in Venice.

“ ‘I must dismiss this man,’ he said to me next morning, ‘I am unable to reward him as he deserves.’

“ Biondello, who had heard these words, came nearer. ‘Most gracious sir,’ he said, ‘if you do that you will deprive me of my best reward.’

“ ‘You are destined for something better than a servant,’ said my master, ‘I dare not stand in the way of your advancement.’”

“ ‘Do not press upon me, most gracious sir, better fortune than I have chosen for myself.’”

“ ‘And to neglect such a talent—no, I will not permit it.’

“ ‘Then allow me, most gracious sir, to practice it sometimes in your presence.’

“ And for this the preparations were immediately made. Biondello got a room next to the bed chamber of his master, where he could lull him to sleep or awake him with music. The Prince wished to double his salary, but he declined it with the request that the Prince would allow such intended favor to remain as a deposit in his hands, which he might shortly wish to receive. The Prince now expects that he will come at the first opportunity to ask for something, and whatever it may be, it is granted beforehand. I wait with impatience for news from K***n.”

LETTER III.

BARON DE F—— TO COUNT DE O——.

“ June 4, 18—.

The Marchese of Civitella, who is now quite recovered from his wounds, has been introduced to the Prince by his uncle, the Cardinal, and from that day to this he has followed him like his shadow. Of this young Marchese, Biondello has not told the truth ; at least he has much exaggerated it. He has a very amiable appearance and is irresistible in conversation. It is impossible to dislike him,—he has charmed me at first view. Imagine the most charming figure, dignity and grace in his carriage, a countenance full of spirit and animation, an open inviting address, an insinuating tone of voice, the most fluent eloquence and the most blooming youth, united to all the graces of a refined education. He has none of the contemptible pride or solemn stiffness, which is so contemptible to us in others of the nobility. All within him breathes juvenile gaiety, benevolence and warmth of feeling. His dissipations must have been much exaggerated to me. I never saw a more perfect and beautiful picture of health. If he is really as bad as Biondello says, he is a Siren whom no man can resist.

“He was from the first very candid with me. He confessed with the most agreeable confidence that he had not the best credit with his uncle, and perhaps had deserved this ; that he had, however, earnestly resolved to correct himself, and the merit of it would belong altogether to the Prince. At the same time, he hoped by this means to become reconciled to his uncle, as the Prince could do what he pleased with the Cardinal. Until now he had much wanted a friend and adviser, and he hoped to find both in the Prince.

“The Prince makes use of all the privileges of a tutor, and treats him with the vigilance and severity of a Mentor. But this very relation in which they stand gives him also certain claims upon the Prince of which he very well knows how to avail himself. He never leaves him, being present at all parties which the Prince visits. For the Bucentauro, it has been his fortune to have been hitherto considered too young. Where ever he is with the Prince, he withdraws his attention

from the company, and occupies him in that way which he so well understands. Nobody, they say, heretofore could train him, and it will be a matter worth recording if the Prince should succeed in accomplishing this gigantic work. But I rather fear that the tables will be turned, and that the instructor will go to learn from his pupil, of which there is at present every appearance. The Prince of D*** has taken his departure to the satisfaction of every one, the Prince not excepted. What I predicted, dearest O——, has really come to pass. Such a good understanding could not last long between persons of such opposite character, exposed to such unavoidable collision. The Prince of D*** had not been long in Venice when a schism arose in the spiritual world, which exposed our Prince to the danger of losing one half of his admirers. Wherever he appeared he found his rival in his road, who possessed the exact amount of petty cunning and self conceit necessary to render important every trifling advantage which the Prince might give him over himself. As every little artifice was also at his service, the use of which a noble self-esteem interdicted to our Prince, he could not fail to have all the silly ones on his side, and to make a show at the head of a party worthy himself.*

“It would certainly have been more reasonable not to have entered into a contest with an antagonist of this character, and some months before this would unquestionably have been the course which the Prince would have adopted. But he had already entered the stream too far to reach the shore so readily. Although these varieties had obtained a certain value with him from circumstances only, and although he really despised them, his pride would not allow him to remove them at a period when his yielding would have been taken as an involuntary resolution rather than as a confession of his own defeat. The baneful effect of careless cutting remarks, passed from one side to the other, added to the feeling, and the spirit of rivalry which inspired his adherents, had imparted itself to him. To secure therefore his conquests, and to sustain himself in the dangerous position which public opinion had assigned to him, he considered it necessa-

* NOTE OF THE COUNT DE O——. The severe judgment which the Baron de F—— allows himself to make here, and in some parts of the first letter, every one who has had the pleasure of a more intimate acquaintance with the Prince, will at once perceive to be exaggerated, and excuse it on account of the prejudiced mind of the youthful judge.

ry to increase his opportunities to make a display, and to place others under obligation to him, and this could only be done by princely expenditure of money. On this account he made many presents, he frequently gave expensive concerts, gambling parties, feasts and banquets. And because this singular rage was communicated to the suite and servants of both, he had to aid the good will of his people by his liberality. A long chain of embarrassments was the inevitable result of a single, almost pardonable, weakness, of which the Prince, at an unhappy moment, became apprised.

"We are now relieved of the rival, but what he has corrupted is not easily made pure. The purse of the Prince is exhausted; what he had saved for years by a prudent economy, is gone; we must make haste to leave Venice in order that he may not run in debt, of which, hitherto, he has taken the most diligent care. Our departure is determined upon as soon as we can get remittances.

"All these expenditures might, however, have well been made if my master had gained thereby a single pleasure. But he was never less happy than now. He feels that he is not as he used to be—he is moody, he is discontented with himself and plunges into new diversions to escape from the consequences of the old. One new acquaintance follows another, which involves him still deeper. I do not foresee what the result will be. We must be off—there is no other deliverance—we must depart from Venice.

"But, dearest friend, still not a line from you! How shall I interpret this long silence?"

LETTER IV.

BARON DE F—— TO COUNT DE O——.

"June 18th, 18—.

"I thank you, dearest friend, for the token of remembrance which young B**hl brought me from you. But what do you mean by letters which I should have received from you? I have not received one letter—not a single line. What a round-about way they must have taken! In future, dearest O——, when you honor me with letters, send them by way of Trent, and under the address of my master.

"At last we have been obliged to take the step which until now we have so happily avoided. The drafts have failed to arrive—failed now for the first time, when our wants were pressing, and we were obliged to apply to a usurer, because the Prince readily pays a little higher percentage for secrecy. The worst of this disagreeable accident is that it delays our departure.

"On this occasion some explanations took place between me and the Prince. The whole business was transacted by Biondello, and the Hebrew was there before I had an idea of it. To see the Prince brought to this extremity awakened all my recollections of the past, and all my fears for the future, so that I may well have looked morose and sullen when the usurer had gone. The Prince, whom the past scenes had made very irritable, walked impatiently through the room. The rolls were still lying upon the table. I was standing at the window and occupied myself by counting the panes of glass in the windows of the Hotel of the Procurators; after a long silence he at length burst out :

"'F——,' he began, 'I cannot bear gloomy faces about me !'

"I was silent.

"'Why do you not answer me? Do I not see that it oppresses your heart to have no opportunity to pour out your vexation?—and I command you to speak. You might otherwise think a great deal of the wise things which you conceal.'

"'If I am gloomy, most gracious sir,' I said, 'it is only because I do not see you in a good humor.'

"'I know,' he continued, 'that you have disliked me for some time past,—all my doings are disapproved—that—what writes the Count of O——?'

"'Count O—— has not written to me at all.'

"'Not at all? Why do you deny it? you revealed to each other your very hearts—the Count and you—I know it very well. You may own it to me. I will not intrude upon your secrets.'

"'Count O——,' I said, 'has not yet answered the first of three letters, which I wrote to him.'

"'I was wrong,' he continued, 'Is not that so,' taking a roll of money, 'I should not have done that?'

"'I see very well that it was necessary.'

"'I should not have exposed myself to the necessity.'

"I was silent.

"To be sure, I should never have ventured to extend my wishes, and should have become an old man in the same way that I grew up to manhood. Because I for once overstepped the bounds of the dreary monotony of my former life, and looked about to see whether there was not some other source of enjoyment to be found—because I—'

"If it was an experiment, most gracious sir, I have no more to say. The experience which it has brought you, would not be paid for too dearly had it cost thrice as much. I confess, that it grieved me that public opinion was to decide how you should be happy.'

"Happy for you, that you can despise the opinion of the world. I am the creature—the slave of opinion. And what are we all but opinion. All that relates to us Princes is but opinion. It is our nurse and tutor in infancy, our legislator and mistress in manhood, and our support in old age. Take from us what opinion gives us, and the lowest of the lower classes is better off than we, for fate has created to him a philosophy suited to his destiny. A Prince who laughs at opinion degrades himself, like the priest who denies the existence of a God.'

"And yet most gracious Prince—'

"I know what you are going to say, I might transgress the circle which my birth has drawn around me. But can I also remove all false conceptions from my memory, which education and early custom have implanted there, and which an hundred thousand fools among you have contributed to establish more and more firmly. Every one likes to be what he appears, and to appear happy is our existence. Because we cannot be so in your way, shall we not strive to be so at all. If we can no longer draw pleasure directly from pure sources, shall we not deceive ourselves with artificial enjoyment, and not dare to receive a small indemnification from the same hand that robbed us?'

"Once you found that in your own heart.'

"And if I find it there no longer? Oh! how did we chance to speak of this? Why did you awaken in me these recollections? Supposing that I had recourse to this excitement of the senses in order to silence a voice within me which constitutes the misery of my life. Supposing that I have done it to quiet this inquisitive reason which, like a cut-

ting instrument, moves within my brain, and with every new inquiry cuts off another branch of my happiness?"

"My best Prince!—" He had arisen and was walking through the room unusually affected."

"When every thing sinks before and behind me—when the past lies like a realm of petrefaction—when the future offers nothing—when I see the whole circle of my existence ended in the small space of the present,—who will blame me for embracing this meagre moment of time ardently, and as if I could not be satisfied, as I would a friend whom I was looking upon for the last time! Should I hasten to grasp this transitory enjoyment like the Octogenarian with his tiara? Oh the moment! I have learned how to value it. The moment—the moment is our mother—let us cherish it like a mother."

"Most gracious sir, in former times you believed in more lasting enjoyment."

"O! cause but the vision to remain and I will embrace it with my glowing arms. What pleasure can it afford me to bless apparitions which to-morrow will be gone?—Is not every thing about me fleeting. One runs against another and each pushes his neighbor away to take hastily a drop from the spring of life, and to go away languishing for more. Now, in the moment when I am in the full enjoyment of my vigor, an embryo life is already nourished in the expectancy of my corruption. Show me a being which lasts for ever, and I will be virtuous."

"What has supplanted the beneficent sentiments which were once the enjoyment and the standard of your life? To plant seeds for futurity—to serve a higher—eternal order—"

"Futurity! Eternal order!—If we take away what man has taken from his own breast and substituted as a design to his imaginary deity,—as a law of nature—what is

*NOTE OF THE BARON DE F——.—I have taken pains, dearest O——, faithfully to relate to you this important conversation which arose between us, exactly as it occurred, but this was impossible though I wrote it down the same night. To assist my memory I was obliged to bring the ideas, which the Prince expressed, into a certain order which it had not, and in that way originated this mixture of free conversation, and philosophical lectures, which is both better and worse than the source from which I drew it, yet I assure you that I have rather taken from than added to the ideas of the Prince, and that nothing of it belongs to me but the arrangement and some few remarks which you will readily detect by their silliness.

THE VISIONARY.

there left us? What has preceded me, and what is to follow me, I regard as two black impenetrable veils, which hang down on both limits of human life, and which no mortal has yet uplifted. Many hundred generations have already stood before it, and guessed and guessed what was hidden behind it. Many see their own shadows,—the visions of their passions magnified, move upon the veil of futurity, and they shudder at the phantoms of their own creating. Poets, philosophers and politicians have painted it with their dreams, lighter or darker, as the heavens above them were cloudy or serene, and at a distance the prospective had deceived them. Many jugglers too have profited by this general curiosity, and astonished the fantasy by singular exhibitions. Deep silence reigns behind this veil. No one who has once passed it answers thence. All that has ever been heard is a hollow echo in reply to the question—like calling into a grave. All must pass this veil, and they touch it with horror, uncertain who may stand behind it to receive them, *quid sit it, quod tantum morituri vident*. To be sure there have been infidels, who have asserted that this veil only fooled men, and who have said that the reason that nothing was seen, was because there was nothing to see behind it, but to convince them they were speedily sent there.’

“‘It certainly was a hasty conclusion, if they had no better reason than that they saw nothing.’

“‘You see my dear friend that I readily acquiesce in not looking behind this veil, and it will be wise if I wean myself from all curiosity. But by drawing this circle which is not to be passed over, and enclosing my whole being within the bounds of the present, this small spot which I had before been in danger of neglecting, for vain thought of futurity, becomes so much the more important to me. What you call the design of my existence concerns me now no more. I cannot avoid it—I cannot accelerate it—but I know and confidently believe that I have to accomplish such a design, and that I do accomplish it. But the medium which nature has chosen to accomplish her design with me, is the more sacred to me—it is all which is mine—my morality—my happiness. All the rest I shall never know. I am like a messenger who carries a sealed letter to the place of its destination. Whatever it contains, it is all the same to him. He has nothing to gain by it but his fee.’

“‘Oh how little do you leave whereon to rely.’

“ ‘But how have we gone astray!’ the Prince now exclaimed, looking smilingly at the table, upon which the rolls were lying. ‘And still not so far astray after all,’ he added, ‘for perhaps you will again find me in this mode of life. I too—shall I confess it to you?—I too could not wean myself at once from this mode of life. I could not separate the supports of my morality and my happiness from this lovely dream with which all about me, until now, had been so intimately connected. I longed for that levity which made existence supportable to most men around me. Every thing which carried me away from myself was welcome to me. I wished to sink—to destroy this source of my sufferings, at the same time with the susceptibility to suffer.’ ”

“ Here a visiter interrupted us. In my next letter I shall entertain you with news which you will hardly expect after such a discourse.”

LETTER V.

BARON DE F—— TO THE COUNT DE O——.

“ July 1, 18—.”

“ As our departure from Venice rapidly approaches, this week was set apart to visit all that is worth seeing of pictures or edifices—a matter which is always delayed by the prospect of a long stay. Our attention was particularly directed to the marriage at Canæ, by Paul Veronese, which is to be seen in a Benedictine Convent at the Island of St. George. Do not expect of me a description of this extraordinary work of art, which, upon the whole, has afforded me a great deal of surprise, and but very little enjoyment. It would have required as many hours as we employed minutes, to examine a composition of one hundred and twenty figures, occupying a space of more than thirty feet square. What human eye could comprehend such a whole, and enjoy at one impression the whole beauty which the artist has lavished there? It is such a pity, though, that a work of such superior worth, which should be exhibited in a public place and enjoyed by every one, has no better destination than to amuse a number of monks in their refectory. The chapel of this convent also deserves to be seen. It is one of the handsomest in the city.

"Towards evening we crossed to the Giudecca to spend a beautiful night there in the charming gardens. The company, which was not very large, soon dispersed, and Civitella, who the whole day had sought an opportunity to speak to me, drew me aside into a quiet nook.

"'You are the friend of the Prince,' he began, 'from whom he has no secrets, which I know from a very good source. To-day as I stepped into his hotel, a man came out whose profession is known to me.' I wished to interrupt him. 'You cannot deny it,' he continued, 'I know my man, I scrutinized him, and can it be possible that the Prince having friends in Venice—friends indebted to him even to the whole of their possessions and their lives—should be obliged, in a case of necessity, to make use of such creatures? Be candid Baron! Is the Prince embarrassed? You attempt in vain to conceal it. What I do not hear from you, I can ascertain through a man to whom all secrets are venal.

"'Marchese!—'

"'Pardon me, I must appear indiscreet not to become ungrateful. I owe to the Prince my life, and what I value much more, a judicious use of life. Should I see the Prince take steps which may cost him dear—which are below his dignity? Should it be in my power to prevent this, and should I remain passive?'

"'The Prince is not embarrassed,' I said. 'Some drafts which we expected by way of Trent have unexpectedly failed to arrive—accidentally no doubt, or, because from the uncertainty as to the time of his departure, a more particular direction was expected. That has now been given, and until then—'

"'He shook his head. 'Do not misunderstand my intentions,' he said. 'It cannot here be made a question whether it is to relieve me from my obligations to the Prince. Would all my uncle's riches suffice to do this? My object is to save him a single unpleasant moment.'

"'My uncle has a large fortune of which I can dispose as of my own property. A happy accident has brought to me the only possible case in which a part of all that is in my power can be of some service to the Prince. I know,' he continued, 'what delicacy requires of the Prince—but that is a mutual feeling, and it would be generous of the Prince to allow me this small satisfaction, if it were only for appearance sake—to make the weight of obligation which oppresses me, less perceptible.'

"He did not cease till I had promised him to do everything possible. I knew the Prince; and had therefore little hope. He was willing to submit to any conditions, although he confessed that it would hurt his feelings were the Prince to treat him as a stranger.

"In the ardour of conversation, we had left the company and were just returning, when Z**** came towards us.

"I am looking for the Prince—is he not here?"

"We were just going to him,—we thought to find him with the rest of the company."

"The company has met, but he is nowhere to be found. I do not know how we have lost sight of him."

"Civitella now recollected that he might perhaps have thought of visiting the adjoining church, to which he a short time before had directed his attention. We went at once to look for him there. At a distance we had already descried Biondello who was waiting at the entrance of the church. When we drew nearer the Prince stepped a little hastily out of a side door, his face was glowing, his eyes searched for Biondello, whom he called. He appeared urgently to command him to do something, at the same time steadfastly looking at the door, which had remained open. Biondello hastened from him into the church. The Prince passed close by us through the crowd and hastened back to the company where he arrived before us.

"It was concluded to take supper in an open pavilion of this garden, for which the Marchese, without our knowledge, had arranged a little concert, which was very exquisite. A young singer, who performed, delighted us, especially by her charming voice and fine figure. Nothing appeared to make an impression on the Prince. He spoke but little, and answered unconsciously. His eyes were restlessly turned in the direction in which Biondello was to come. A great commotion appeared to be going on within his breast. Civitella asked how the church had pleased him. He knew nothing about it worth mentioning. Some superior pictures were mentioned,—he had seen no pictures. We perceived that our questions annoyed him, and were silent. One hour passed after another, and still Biondello did not come. The impatience of the Prince arose to the highest pitch. He arose early from supper and walked up and down a remote alley with rapid strides. No one could understand what had hap-

pened to him. I did not venture to ask him. For a long time my former familiarity with him had ceased. With the more impatience, therefore, I awaited the return of Biondello, who alone could solve this mystery.

"It was past ten o'clock when he returned. The news which he reported to the Prince did not render him a whit more sociable. He was dejected, when he joined the company. The gondola was ordered and we went home soon afterwards.

"During the whole evening I could not find an opportunity to speak to Biondello. I had therefore to lie down to sleep without having my curiosity gratified. The Prince had dismissed us early, but a thousand thoughts which passed through my mind kept me awake. I heard him walk up and down his room, which was over my sleeping chamber, for a long while. At last sleep overcame me. Late, after midnight, a voice awoke me,—a hand moved over my face. When I looked up, the Prince stood by my bedside with a light in his hand. He said that he could not sleep, and asked me to assist him in shortening the night. I wished to dress, but he ordered me to remain in bed and sat down by my side.

"'To-day something has happened me,' he began, 'the impression of which will never be obliterated from my mind. When I left you I walked, as you know, to the — church, by a description of which Civitella had raised my curiosity, and which, from a distance, had already attracted my attention. I walked the short distance to it alone, because neither yourself nor he were immediately at hand. I told Biondello to wait for me at the entrance. The church was vacant. A chilling feeling came over me, and darkness surrounded me when I entered from the sultry blinding light of the day. I found myself solitary in that wide vault, wherein the silence of the grave prevailed. I placed myself in the middle of the dome, and yielded myself up to the power of my impressions. By degrees I distinguished more and more plainly the vast proportions of this majestic structure. I lost myself in serious delightful contemplation. The evening bell resounded above me,—its sound reverberated greatly in this vault, and also seemed in unison with my feelings. Some pictures near the altar had attracted my attention. I walked near to examine them. Without perceiving it, I had walked to the opposite end of the church. Here, around the base of a column, some

steps ascended to a chapel where several small altars and statues of saints are placed in niches. When I entered the chapel, I heard a soft whisper to the right, as if some one was speaking low—I turned toward the sound, and at a distance of two paces, I perceived a female figure,—no, I cannot describe this figure! Fear was my first impression, which soon gave way to the sweetest astonishment.’

“‘And this figure most gracious sir? Are you certain that it was living, real—not a mere picture—no vision of your phantasy?’

“‘Listen. It was a lady. No! To this moment I had not perceived the sex. All about was dark. Through a single window only, the rays of the setting sun could not fall within the chapel, except upon this figure. With inexpressible grace, half kneeling, half reclining, she was lying like a statue before the altar, of the most lovely and perfect contour, solitary and inimitable, the fairest thing in nature. She was dressed in black mohair, which tightly encircled the most charming waist, the most delicate arms, and spread about her in large folds like a Spanish robe. Her long bright brown hair, wreathed in two large plaits, had from their weight fallen down under the veil along her back in charming confusion; one hand was lying on the crucifix, and gently reclining she rested on the other. But where shall I find words to describe the heavenly beauty of her face, where an angel’s spirit as if enthroned had spread the profuse abundance of its charms. The evening sun played over it, and his golden rays appeared to cast round it an artificial glory. Can you recollect the Madonna of our Florentine? Here she was perfect, perfect even to the irregular peculiarities which I found so attractive, so irresistible in that picture.’

“In regard to the Madonna of which the Prince here speaks the following is the history. Shortly after you had departed he became acquainted with a Florentine painter, who was called to Venice to paint an altar-piece for a church, which one I do not recollect. He had brought with him three other pictures which he had intended for the gallery in the Cornarian Palace. The pictures were a Madonna, a Heloise and Vents almost denuded—all three of superior beauty, and, notwithstanding their diversity, were so equal in value that it was almost impossible to decide exclusively in favor of any one of them. The Prince alone did not hesitate for a moment. The Madonna piece attracted his whole attention. In the

other two he admired the genius of the artist, in this he forgot the artist and his art, to dwell altogether in the contemplation of his work. He was wonderfully affected by it. He could hardly tear himself away from the picture. The artist, who, as could be perceived, in his heart confirmed the judgment of the Prince, had the caprice not to be willing to separate the three pieces, and asked 1500 zechins for all. The Prince offered him half that sum for this one, the artist insisted upon his condition, and it is impossible to say what the result might have been had not a decided purchaser appeared. Two hours afterwards the three pieces were gone. We have not seen them since. This picture now came to the recollection of the Prince.

“‘I was standing,’ he continued, ‘I was standing lost in contemplating her. She did not observe me. She was not disturbed at my appearance, so entirely lost was she in her devotion. She prayed to her deity and I prayed to her. All these pictures of saints, these altars, these burning tapers had not reminded me of it—now only it struck me that I was in a sanctuary, shall I confess it to you?—I firmly believed at that moment in Him upon whose image she had laid her fair hand. I read his answer in her eyes. Thanks to her devotion—she made him real to me. I followed her in fancy through all His heavens.’

“‘She arose, and now I recovered myself. With shy confusion I stepped aside. The noise which I made discovered me to her. This unexpected proximity of a man might well have caused her to be surprised—my boldness might well have given her offence—there were no traces of either, however, in the look which she cast upon me. Tranquillity, inexpressible tranquillity, was upon it, and a benign smile played around her cheeks. She came from her heaven, and I was the first happy creature who presented himself to her benevolence. She was yet floating, as it were, upon the last step of prayer—she had not yet touched the earth.’

“‘In another corner of the chapel, something now also moved. It was an elderly lady, who arose from a pew close behind me, I had not until now perceived her. She was but a few paces from me, and had seen all my movements. This confounded me. I cast my eyes down and they rushed past me.’

“‘As he was about to close, I thought that I should be able to console him.’

“‘Strange!’—the Prince continued after a deep silence, ‘can it be possible that one having never known and never missed another person can, in a moment, undergo such a change as to live in her, and her solely? Can a single moment present a man as two different beings so totally dissimilar? It would be just as impossible for me to return to the pleasures and wishes of yesterday, as to the plays of my childhood. Since I have seen that—since this figure has lived here—this living, powerful feeling arose in my breast, you can love nothing more than this, and in this world nothing else will take effect upon you.’

“‘Consider, most gracious sir, in what an irritable frame of mind you were when this apparition surprised you, and how much conspired to excite your imagination. From the clear dazzling day-light—from the crowded street, suddenly transported to this silent darkness, altogether given up to the sensations, which, as you confess yourself, the silence and majesty of the place had excited in you—altogether made more susceptible to the beautiful by viewing beautiful works of art—alone and retired, as you thought—and was suddenly surprised by the proximity of a female figure, where you did not expect a witness—of a beauty, as I readily grant you, still more advantageously set off by the favorable light, a happy position and an expression of inspired devotion—what was more natural than that your excited fancy should draw from it something ideal—something celestially perfect?’

“‘Can the fancy present what it never received?—and in the whole scope of my imagination there is nothing which I could compare to this figure. Perfect and unchanged, as in the moment of contemplation, it lies in my memory—I have nothing but this figure, and for the thoughts of it, you might offer me worlds in vain.’

“‘Most gracious Prince, that is love.’

“‘Must there then of necessity be a name under which I am happy? Love!—do not degrade my feelings by a name which is abused by a thousand weak souls! Who else has felt what I feel? Such a being has not yet existed. How can there be a name for a new born sentiment like that which I feel? It is a new and unique feeling which has but just arisen with this new and unique being which has aroused it, and is only possible to be conceived of in connection with that being! Love!—I am proof against love!’

“‘You sent Biondello away—no doubt to follow the footsteps of your unknown—to get information concerning her? What news did he bring you.’

Biondello has discovered nothing, or next to nothing. He found her still at the church door. An aged, decently dressed man, who looked rather like a citizen of the place, than a servant, appeared to attend her to the gondola. A number of the poor ranged themselves along her path as she passed, and left her with a very contented *mein*. On this occasion, Biondello says, a hand became visible on which some precious stones glittered. She spoke a few words to her attendant, which he did not understand; he asserts that it was Greek. As they had to walk some distance to the canal, people had already begun to collect. The extraordinary appearance of things caused every passer-by to stop. Nobody knew her—but beauty is born a queen. All respectfully made room for her. She let a black veil fall over her face which covered half her dress, and hastened into the gondola. Along the whole canal of the Giudecca, Biondello kept the boat in sight, but the crowd prevented him from following it any longer.’

“‘But he has certainly marked the gondolier, so that at least he will know him again?’

“‘He is confident of finding him out, but it is none of those with whom he has intercourse. The poor whom he questioned could give him no other information than that the Signora had already appeared for some weeks, and always on Saturday, and that she had, as yet, always distributed a gold piece among them. It was a Dutch ducat, which he exchanged for another and brought me.’

“‘A Greek then, and of rank as it appears—at least of fortune and charitable. That is enough for the first, most gracious sir—enough and almost too much. But a Greek, and in a catholic church?’

“‘Why not? She can have changed her creed. Moreover some secret exists here. Why does she come but once a week? why on Saturdays to this church, when it is usually deserted, as Biondello tells me? The next Saturday, at furthest, must decide it. But help me, dear friend, to pass the time until then. But in vain! The hours move quietly apace and my soul burns within me.’

“‘And when that day appears—what then, most gracious sir? What shall then be done?’

“‘What shall be done? I shall see her. I shall find out

where she lives. I shall ascertain who she is. What do I care about that? What I saw made me happy, therefore, I already know all that can make me happy!"

"And our departure from Venice,—that is fixed upon the beginning of next month."

"Could I know before hand that Venice still contained such a treasure for me? You ask me concerning my life of yesterday—I say that I can and will be only from to-day."

"I thought now that I had found an opportunity to keep my word with the Marchese. I gave the Prince to understand that his protracted stay in Venice would positively disagree with the reduced state of his purse, and that he could not depend much upon assistance from his Court in case that he prolonged his stay beyond the granted term. On this occasion I heard, what until now was a secret to me, that exclusive of his other brothers, and secretly, considerable sums are paid to him by his sister, the reigning *** of ***, which she would readily double if his Court should forsake him. This sister, a pious enthusiast, as you know, believes that the great savings which she makes at a moderately expensive Court, are no where better kept than by a brother whose wise charity she knows, and whom she enthusiastically worships. I was aware that for a long time a very intimate connexion had existed between the two, and that they often interchanged letters, but hitherto the expenses of the Prince could have been supplied from sources known to me,—I had not discovered this hidden resource. It is evident, therefore, that the Prince has had expenses which were and still are a secret from me; and, to judge from his character, they certainly are such as tend to his humor. And could I have imagined that I had read his character? After this discovery I thought I need so much the less hesitate to reveal to him the offer of the Marchese, which, not a little to my surprise, was accepted without any difficulty. He authorized me to arrange this matter with the Marchese in the way I thought best, and then to settle with the usurer immediately. He wished to write to his sister without delay."

"It was morning when we separated from each other. Unpleasant as this accident is, and must be to me, from various considerations, from this passion I expect more good than evil. It is perhaps the most effectual way to bring down the Prince from his metaphysical dreams to ordinary humanity. It will have the usual crisis, and then, like an artificial sickness, carry off the old complaint."

"Farewell, dearest friend. I have written you all this, immediately after it had happened. The mail is on the point of starting,—you will receive this and my last letter on the same day.

LETTER VI.

BARON DE F—— TO THE COUNT DE O——.

July 20, 18—.

"The Civitella is the most serviceable man in the world. The Prince had scarcely left me the other day, when a note was brought to me from the Marchese, in which he most urgently recommended the matter to me. I sent him at once an obligation for 6,000 zechins in the name of the Prince—it was returned in less than half an hour with double that sum in drafts, as well as gold. The Prince at last consented to the increased amount of the sum, but the obligation, which was given for six weeks only, was obliged to be accepted.

"This whole week was spent in inquiries after the mysterious Greek. Biondello put all his instruments in motion, but all however in vain. He found the gondolier, but from him nothing more was to be learned, than that he had landed both ladies on the island of Murano, where two chairs awaited them, into which they had stepped. He supposed them to be English ladies, because they had spoken a foreign language, and paid him in gold. Neither did he know their attendant. He thought him to be a looking-glass manufacturer from Murano. We have at least acquired sufficient knowledge of them to know that we need not search for them in the Giudecca, and that in all probability they were living on the island of Murano; but the misfortune was that the description which the Prince gave of her was by no means sufficient to render her cognizable to a third person. The very passionate attention itself, wherewith he had, as it were, overwhelmed her, had prevented him from seeing her: he had been blind to all that to which other people would have principally directed their attention. According to his description one would have rather been tempted to look for her in Petrarch or Tasso, than on a Venitian island. Besides this,

inquiry had to be made with the greatest caution, in order that we might not expose the lady, nor otherwise excite offensive publicity.

“Biondello was the only one, besides the Prince, who had seen her, and that only through her veil, and could, therefore, recognize her; he tried to be, if possible, at the same time at all places where he supposed her to be. The life of the poor fellow consisted for this week in nothing but a continued running through all the streets of Venice. In the Greek church, especially, no inquiries were spared, but all with the same ill success, and the Prince, whose impatience rose with every disappointed expectation, had at last to give up all hopes until the following Saturday.

“His restlessness was terrible. Nothing diverted him, nothing could captivate his attention. His whole system was in a state of feverish excitement. He was lost to society, and in solitude the evil increased. He was, however, never more beset with visits than during this very week. It was announced that he would soon depart, and all thronged to see him. These persons had to be occupied to divert their suspicions from him; he had to be occupied to divert his mind. In this dilemma Civitella proposed playing, and to remove the crowd, it was to be high play. He hoped at the same time, to raise in the Prince a passing taste for play, which would soon repress the romantic course of his passion, and of which he might be deprived at any time. ‘The cards,’ Civitella said, ‘have prevented many follies, which I was about committing, and atoned for many which I had committed. The rest, the reason of which a pair of beautiful eyes deprived me, I often regained at the Faro table, and the ladies never had more power over me than when I was in want of money for gaming.’

“I will not discuss how far Civitella was right—but the means which we employed soon began to be more dangerous than the evil which they were intended to remove. The Prince, who could take but little interest in the play, except by hazarding large sums, soon lost all limits. He was completely off his axis. All he did assumed a passionate aspect. All was done with the impatient eagerness which now prevailed in him. You know his indifference to money—it now became a total insensibility. Gold pieces melted in his hands like water-dross. He lost almost uninterruptedly, because he played without the least attention. He lost immense sums

because he hazarded money like a desperate gambler. Dearest O—— I write it down with palpitation—in four days the twelve thousand zechins—and more—were lost.

“Do not reproach me. My own conscience accuses me sufficiently. But could I prevent it? Would he hear me? Could I do more than remonstrate with him? I did all that was in my power. I cannot accuse myself of guilt.

“Civitella also lost considerably. I won about six hundred zechins. The unprecedented bad luck of the Prince attracted attention,—so much the less could he leave off playing. Civitella, whose joy in obliging him is apparent, advanced a sum at once. The breach is repaired, but the Prince owes the Marchese 24,000 zechins. O! how I long for the spare money of the pious sister! Are all Princes alike, dearest friend? The Prince behaves himself not otherwise than as if he had conferred a great honor on the Marchese, and the latter at least plays his part well.

“Civitella had to console me by asserting that this very excess, this extraordinary misfortune, was the surest way to restore the Prince to reason. As to money there was no difficulty. He, himself, did not feel the deficiency in the least, and was always at the service of the Prince with three times as much. The Cardinal too, gave me the assurance that the disposition of his nephew was sincere, and that he also was willing to give to him.

“The greater was our sorrow that even these enormous sacrifices had no effect. One would have thought that the Prince would have taken an interest in the playing; not in the least did he do so. His thoughts were far off, and the passion which we wished to suppress, appeared to feed upon his ill luck at play. At a decisive point of the game, when all pressed about his table in anxious expectation, his eyes searched for Biondello, to steal from his face the news which perchance he might bring. Biondello never brought any thing, and the cards always lost.

“The money, however, came into very needy hands. Some lordlings who, as the evil world says of them, used to carry their frugal dinners home from market in their senators' bonnets, entered our house beggars, and left it wealthy men. Civitella pointed them out to me, ‘Look,’ said he, ‘how many poor devils derive benefit from it when it comes into the head of a prudent man to be out of his proper mind. But that pleases me. That is princely and kingly. A great man must make

people happy even in his aberrations of mind, and like an overflowing river irrigate the neighboring fields.'

"Civitella thinks honestly and nobly, but the Prince owes him 24,000 zechins!

"Saturday, so anxiously expected, came at last, and my master was not to be detained from appearing early in the afternoon at the *** Church. He took a seat in the same chapel where he had seen his unknown on the first occasion, but in such a position that she could not see him at once. Biondello was ordered to keep watch at the church door, and to make an acquaintance with the attendant of the lady. I had taken it upon myself to take a seat in the same gondola upon their return, as an unsuspected passenger, to follow the traces of the unknown, if all the rest should fail. At the same place where, according to the declaration of the gondolier, she had landed on the previous occasion, two chairs were engaged; the Prince besides ordered de Z——, the gentleman of the chamber, to follow in another gondola. The Prince wished to live altogether in her contemplation, and try his fortune in the church if practicable. Civitella stayed away altogether, because he was in too bad a repute with the ladies of Venice, not to make the lady suspicious by his interference. You see, dearest Count, it was not the fault of our preparations if we missed the fair unknown.

"Never, I believe, were there more ardent wishes expressed in a church than here, and never were they more cruelly disappointed. The Prince persevered until sun-down, kept in expectation by every noise that approached the chapel—by every creaking of the church door. Full seven hours passed and yet no Greek! I will not tell you anything of the state of his mind. You know what a frustrated passion is—and a hope too on which one has almost lived for several days and nights."

LETTER III.

BARON DE F—— TO COUNT DE O——.

"July —, 18—.

"The mysterious unknown of the Prince reminded the Marchese of a romantic apparition that happened to himself some time since, and to divert the Prince he consented to relate it to us. I relate it to you in his own words. But the jovial spirit with which he knows how to inspire all which he says, is certainly lost in my narration.

"Last spring,' the Marchese related, 'I had the misfortune to irritate the Spanish Ambassador, who, in his seventieth year, had committed the folly of intending to marry a lady from Rome of eighteen years of age. His vengeance pursued me, and my friends advised me to escape from the effects of it by a speedy flight, until the hand of nature, or an amicable accommodation, had delivered me from this dangerous enemy. But as I found it too difficult to abandon Venice altogether, I took my abode in a distant quarter of Murano, where I occupied a house under an assumed name, and kept myself close during the day, and amused myself at night with my friends.'

"My window overlooked a garden which on the western side was bordered by a wall which surrounded a convent, which extended into the Lagoon like a peninsula, on the east side. The garden was most charmingly arranged, but was little visited. In the morning, when my friends withdrew, I was in the habit of spending a few moments at the window, to see the sun arise over the gulf, and then to bid him good night. If you have not yet enjoyed this pleasure, most gracious Prince, I recommend to you this station, perhaps the most exquisite in Venice to enjoy this glorious view. A purple night lies over the deep, and his golden beams announces him from afar on the skirts of the Lagoon. Heaven and sea rest in expectation. A moment, and he stands there whole and perfect, and all the waves appear to flame. It is a charming spectacle!

"One morning, when as usual, I enjoyed this delightful view, I suddenly discovered that I was not the only witness of it. I thought I heard human voices in the garden, and when I turned towards the sound I perceived a gondola that came to the shore. In a few moments I saw people come forth in the

garden, and come up the path at a slow pace. I distinguished a lady and gentleman, who had a little negro with them. The lady was dressed in white—a brilliant played upon her finger. More I could not distinguish in the twilight.

“My curiosity was excited; certainly it was a rendezvous, and a pair of lovers,—but why at this place, and at such an unusual hour?—for it was scarcely three o’clock, and all nature was lying veiled in a cloudy twilight. The idea appeared novel to me. I determined to await the issue.

“In the shrubberies of the garden I soon lost sight of them, and it was some time before they appeared again. An agreeable song meanwhile fills the neighborhood. It came from the gondolier, who passed his time in that manner in his gondola, and who was answered by a comrade in the vicinity. They were stanzas from Tasso. Time and place harmoniously accorded, and the melody died away sweetly in the general silence.

“Meanwhile day had dawned, and objects could be better distinguished. I sought my people. Hand in hand they were now walking up a broad alley, stopping frequently. But they turned their backs upon me, and their road leads them from my dwelling. From the easy grace of their carriage I infer that they are of high rank, and from a splendid and elegant shape I infer an unusual beauty. They spoke little, as it appeared to me, but the lady more than her companion. They appeared to take no notice of the gorgeous beauty of the sun-rise, which spread just now above them in the greatest splendor.

“When I had got my spy-glass to bring this singular scene as near to me as possible, they suddenly disappeared in a side-walk and a long time elapsed ere I saw them again. The sun had now arisen, and the couple appeared close below me and looked straight towards me—what a heavenly vision did I see. Was it the play of my imagination?—was it the magic of the illumination? It seemed that I saw a supernatural being, and my eye quivered, struck by the dazzling light. So much grace combined with so much majesty!—so much spirit and nobleness with such blooming youth! It is in vain that I attempt to describe it to you. Until this moment I had no conception of beauty.

“The interest of the conversation retained them in my vicinity, and I had full leisure to loose myself in this wonderful view. But my eyes had scarcely fallen upon her companion when even this extraordinary beauty could not turn them

off him. He appeared to me to be a man in the prime of life, a little lean, and of a large, noble stature, but from no human brow had so much apparent sublime godlike thought beamed upon me. Though secure from being discovered myself, I could not bear the penetrating look that darted forth like lightning from under his dark eyebrows. A quiet pathetic sadness was lying about his eyes, and a line of benevolence around the lips moderated the deep melancholy which overshadowed his whole face. But a certain cast of the countenance, which was not European, together with a dress which was happily chosen from among different fashions and with a taste which few could imitate, gave to him an air of eccentricity which heightened not a little the extraordinary impression made by his manner. From something perplexed in his look, he might be supposed an enthusiast, but his gestures and manner proclaimed him a man whom the world had formed.'

"Z—— whom you know must speak all that he thinks, here could no longer moderate himself. 'Our Armenian,' he cried. 'Our same Armenian, none else!'

"'What Armenian, if I may ask?' Civitella said.

"'Has that farce not yet been told you?' said the Prince. 'But no interruption, I begin to interest myself in your man. Continue your tale.'

"'There was something incomprehensible in his behaviour. His looks rested upon her with significance—with passion, when she looked aside and on the ground when they encountered his. Was the man out of his senses? I thought I could have remained forever on the same spot looking at nothing else.'

"'The shubbery again excluded them from view. I waited long, long to see them come forth, but in vain. From another window I at last discovered them.'

"'They were standing before a basin at a certain distance from each other, but in deep silence. They might have been standing in this position for some time. Her open, animated eye rested searchingly upon him, and appeared to catch from his brow every rising thought. He, as if he did not feel courage enough to look her in the face, clandestinely sought with his eyes her picture in the reflecting flood, or looked steadfastly upon the dolphin which threw the water into the basin. Who can imagine how long this mute play would have lasted, could the lady have endured it. With the most lovely

gracefulness the beautiful creature went to him, and threw her arm around around his neck, caught one of his hands and kissed it. Passively he submitted to it, but her caresses remained unrequited.'

"'But there was something in this scene that touched me, and that was the condition of the gentleman. A violent affection appeared to work in his breast—an irresistible power to draw him to her and a hidden arm to draw him back. Silent, but thoughtful was the conflict, and the attraction at his side so beautiful! No, I thought, he has undertaken too much. He must—he will be conquered.'

"'At a secret sign from him the negro disappeared. I now expected a sentimental scene—a kneeling deprecation—a reconciliation sealed by a thousand burning kisses. Nothing of that. The incomprehensible gentleman takes from a portfolio a sealed packet and hands it over to the lady. Sorrow overcasts her face when she looks at it, and a tear glistens in her eye.'

"'After a short silence they proceeded. From a side-walk an aged lady joins them who had during this time remained at a distance, and whom I now for the first time perceived. Slowly they walked down, the ladies conversing together, when he took an opportunity to remain behind them unperceived. Irresolute he stopped and stared at her as she walked, and stopped again. On a sudden he disappeared in the shrubbery.

"'From before, she looked around at last. She appeared to be troubled at finding him no more, and stopped, as it appeared, to wait for him. He does not come. Her looks rove about and she turns back. My eyes helped her to search the whole garden. Still he stayed away,—he was no where to be seen.

"'On a sudden I heard something rustle at the canal and a gondola leaves the shore. It was him, and with an effort I forbore from calling to her.

"'Now all was plain—it was a parting scene.

"'She appeared to divine what I already knew. She hastened to the shore faster than the other could follow her. It was too late. Swift as an arrow the gondola shot away, and a white handkerchief only flutters after in the air. Soon after I also saw the ladies cross.

"'When I awoke from a short slumber I laughed at my delusion. My fancy had continued the accident in a dream

and now the reality itself appeared like a dream. A girl, charming as an Houri who walks with her lover before the dawn of day in a remote garden under my window—a lover who does not know how to make better use of such an hour—this appeared to me to be a case which at best the phantasy of a dream, might attempt an excuse. But the dream itself had been too fine not to recur frequently to my mind, and the garden became dearer to me since my fancy had peopled it with such charming figures. Some inclement days which succeeded this morning frightened me from the window, but the first clear night drew me involuntarily back again. Judge of my surprise when the white garment of my unknown glittered on my vision. It was herself, I had not dreamed.

“The same matron was with her as before, who led a little boy, but she walked aside absorbed in thought. She visited the places which were remarkable to her from the remembrance of her companion. She stopped longer at the basin, and her gazing eye appeared in vain to seek the figure of her beloved.

“If this extreme beauty had ravished me in the first instance, it now acted upon me with a milder power, but not the less strong. I had now perfect liberty to look at her heavenly figure. The surprise of the first view imperceptibly opened the way for sweeter sensations. The glory around her disappeared, and I saw in her no more than the most beautiful of women, who roused all my senses. That moment it was determined. She must be mine.

“When I reflected upon it whether I should go down and approach her, or before I ventured, to make inquiries about her, a small door in the convent was opened and a Carmelite friar stepped out. At the noise which he made the lady left her position. I saw her go with hasty steps to meet him.—He drew a paper from his bosom, which she eagerly caught; joy appeared to spread over her countenance. At that very moment my usual evening visitors drew me from the window which I carefully avoided approaching again, as I did not wish any one else to share this conquest. I endured this painful suspense for a whole hour, until, at last, I succeeded in getting rid of these importunate persons. I hastened back to my window, but all had disappeared.

“When I went down the garden was deserted. Not a vessel was in the canal. Nowhere was a person to be seen.

I neither knew whence she came nor whence she had gone. As I walked along I cast my eyes on every side. Something white glistened at a distance upon the sand. When I reached it I found it to be a paper folded like a letter. What else could it be but the letter which the Carmelite had brought her. Happily found! I exclaimed, this letter will discover to me the whole secret,—it will make me the master of her fate.

The letter was sealed with a Sphinx and written in cyphers, but that did not discourage me, because I knew how to decypher it. I hastily copied it, for it was to be expected that she would soon miss it and come back to search for it. If she could not find it again, it would be a proof to her that the garden was visited by others, and that discovery might easily frighten her from it forever. What worse could befall my hopes?

“What I conjectured, happened. I had scarcely finished my copy, when she appeared again with her former attendant, both searching anxiously. I fastened the letter to a slate which I took from the roof, and let it fall at a place which I knew she must pass. Her beautiful joyousness when she found it, rewarded me for my magnanimity. With a keen searching eye, as if she wanted to find out by it, the profane hand that could have touched it, she examined it on all sides, but the contented air with which she pocketed it, proved that she was altogether without suspicion. She left with a look which seemed to be cast back in thanks to the titular deities of the garden, who had so faithfully guarded the secret of her heart.

“I hastened now to decypher the letter. I tried it in several languages, and succeeded at last in the English. Its contents were so remarkable that I got it by heart.”

“I am interrupted. The conclusion at another time.

LETTER VIII.

BARON DE F——, TO COUNT DE O——.

“*August* —, 18—.

“No dearest friend,—you wrong the good Biondello.—Indeed you entertain a false suspicion. Believe as you please of all other Italians, but this one is honest.

“You think it strange, that a man of such shining talents and such exemplary conduct, should degrade himself as a ser-

vant, had he not some secret motive for it, and therefore you come to the conclusion that his intentions are suspicious. What? Is it then something new that a man of sense and merit, tries to make himself agreeable to a Prince who has it in his power to make his fortune? Is it dishonorable to serve him? Does not Biondello give it sufficiently to be understood that his attachment to the Prince is personal? He has confessed to him that he has a request to make of him. This request, no doubt, will explain to us the whole mystery? Secret intentions he may still have, but may not they be innocent?

"It appears strange to you that this Biondello, during the first months of his service, and they were those when you yet honored us with your presence, had kept concealed all the great talents which he now displays, and had not in any way drawn attention upon himself. That is true. But where had he then an opportunity to distinguish himself? The Prince did not then know his usefulness, yet his other talents were accidentally discovered.

"But quite lately he has given us a proof of his fidelity and honesty which will remove your doubts. The Prince is watched. Attempts are made to get secret information of his manner of living from his acquaintance and relations.—I do not know who is possessed of this curiosity. But listen. Here in St. George there is a public house which Biondello frequents. Perhaps he has some intrigue there—I do not know. Some days since he was there. He found a company together, lawyers and officers of the government, jolly spirits and his old acquaintances. They were surprised and glad to see him. The acquaintance is renewed. Every one relates his history up to that moment. Biondello is requested to relate his. He does so in a few words. They congratulate him on his new establishment. They have been told of the splendid manner of the life of the Prince of ***, of his liberality, especially towards persons who knew how to keep a secret. His connection with the Cardinal A***i is familiar with every one, as well as his love of play, &c. Biondello starts to go. They joked with him, and says that he played the mysterious. They knew that he was the agent of the Prince of ***. The two lawyers took him between them. The bottle was plied. He was invited to drink, and excused himself on the ground that he could not bear wine, but yet drinks apparently to get drunk.

" 'Yes,' said one of the lawyers at last, Biondello knows his trade, but he is but half perfect in it yet."

" 'What do I lack?' Biondello asked.

" 'He understands the art,' said the other, 'to keep a secret to himself, but not the other part,—how to dispose of it to advantage.'

" 'There should be a purchaser for that,' Biondello said.

"The other guests now left the room. He remained tete-a-tete with the two lawyers who now spoke out what they had to say. To make a long story short, they wished that he should make disclosures to them about the intercourse between the Prince, and Cardinal and his nephew, the source from which the Prince drew money, and to direct into their hands the letters that might be written by the Count de O—.

"Biondello appointed another time, but he could not learn from them by whom they were employed. To judge by the splendid offers that were made to him, the inquiry must have come from a very wealthy man.

"Last night he revealed to my master the whole occurrence. The Prince at first wished to have the intermeddlers arrested, but Biondello had objections. They would have to be set free again, and then he would have endangered his credit with this class of persons, and perhaps even his life. These persons were united. All were interested together and for each other. He chose rather to have the Senate of Venice for an enemy, than to be decried by any of them as a traitor. Neither would he be able to be of any service to the Prince if he should lose the confidence of this class of persons.

"We have been trying to divine from whom this might come. Who is there in Venice who cares about knowing what my master receives and pays out, what he has to do with the Cardinal A***i, and what I write to you. Perhaps it is even yet a bequest of the Prince of D——. Perhaps the Armenian is stirring again?"

LETTER IX.

BARON DE F——, TO COUNT DE O——.

"August—, 18—.

"The Prince is swimming in joy and love. He has found is Greek. Hear how this happened.

"A stranger who had come by way of Chiozza and had much to say of the beautiful situation of the city on the gulf, made the Prince curious to see it. We went yesterday and, to avoid constraint, none else were to be of the company but Z—— and myself with Biondello, and my master wished to remain incognito. We found a vessel that was just starting and we took a passage. The company was mixed, but unworthy of notice, and on the trip there was nothing remarkable.

"Chiozza is built on posts that are driven down, and is said to contain forty thousand inhabitants. There are but few nobility, but at every step you encounter fishermen and sailors. Whoever wears a wig and cloak is called rich. A cap and jacket are signs of poverty. The situation of the city is beautiful, but not so fine as Venice.

"We did not stay long. The captain, who had other passengers, had to return again to Venice, and nothing captivated the Prince. All had already gone on board the ship when we arrived. The company had somewhat annoyed us on the previous trip; we took a different cabin. The Prince made inquiry who was there. 'A Dominican and some ladies,' was the answer, 'who are on their return to Venice.' My master was not curious to see them, and returned at once to his cabin.

"The Greek had been the subject of our conversation as we went,—it was the same on our return. The Prince pictured to his vivid imagination her appearance at the church, plans were made and rejected, the time passed swiftly away: ere we thought of it Venice was lying before us. Some of the passengers stepped out—the Dominican among them. The captain went to the ladies, who, as we now for the first time discovered, were separated from us only by a thin board partition, and asked them where he should land. 'At the Island of Murano,' was the answer, and the person's house was named.

"'Island of Murano,' the Prince exclaimed, and a shudder of expectation appeared to pass over him. Before I could answer him, Biondello came in. Do you know in whose company we travel? The Prince started up.—"She is here? Herself! I came just now from her attendant."

"The Prince passed out. The room became too narrow to hold him. The whole world would have been so at this moment. A thousand sensations raged within him,—his knees trembled,—redness and paleness alternately overspread his face.

Full of expectation, I trembled with him. I cannot describe to you his situation.

"At Murano we stopped. The Prince sprang to the shore. She also came. I read in the face of the Prince that it was her. Her appearance left no doubt within me. A more beautiful figure I had never seen. Every description of the Prince has fallen short of the reality.

"A glowing color overspread her face when she beheld the Prince. She must have heard our whole conversation. She could not doubt that she had been the object of it. With a significant glance she looked at her companion as if she wished to say, that is him! And then she cast down her eyes in confusion. A small board was laid from the ship to the shore, over which she had to pass. She appeared afraid to tread upon it, but not, as it appeared to me, because she feared that it might slip but because she could not do it without aid, and already the Prince had extended his arm to assist her. Necessity conquered her hesitation. She accepted his hand and gained the shore. The violent affection of the Prince made him impolite; he forgot the other lady, who was awaiting the same service. What would he not have forgotten at that moment? I offered her my services at last, and that deprived me of the prelude to a conversation that had commenced between my master and the lady.

"He still keeps hold of her hand from absence of mind, I think, and without knowing it himself.

"'It is not the first time, Signora that—that—.' He could not speak out.

"'I could recollect—' she lisped.

"'It was in the *** church,' replied the Prince.

"'Yes, it was in the *** church,' she responded.

"'And could I have imagined to-day—that I was so near you—'

"Here she slowly withdrew her hand. He became evidently confused. Biondello, who had meanwhile been talking to the servant, came to his master's assistance.

"'Signor,' he began, 'the ladies have ordered chairs. But we have returned earlier than they expected. There is a garden in this neighborhood into which you can step to avoid the crowd.'

"The proposition was accepted, and you can imagine with what readiness on the part of the Prince. They remained in the garden until evening. Z—— and I succeeded in occupying the attention of the matron, so that the Prince could converse

with the young lady without being disturbed. That he knew how to make use of these moments you can judge from his having received permission to visit her. Just now, while I write, he is there. When he returns, I shall learn more.

"Yesterday, when he came home, we found the long expected letters from our Court, but also accompanied by a letter which offended my master very much. He is recalled, and in a tone to which he is not accustomed. He has at once answered in a similar tone, and will remain. The drafts are hardly sufficient to pay the interest on the capital which he owes. We long for an answer from his sister."

LETTER X.

BARON DE F—— TO COUNT DE O——.

"September —, 18—.

The Prince has fallen out with his Court. All our resources there are cut off.

"The six weeks, at the expiration of which my master was to have paid the Marchese, have passed for some days, and yet no drafts either from his cousin, whom he had repeatedly and urgently asked for an advance of money, nor from his sister. You can imagine that Civitella did not dun, but the Prince had a more faithful memory. Yesterday, at noon, we received at last an answer from the reigning Court.

"We had shortly before made another contract for our Hotel, and the Prince had already publicly declared his intention of a longer stay. Without saying a word, my master handed the letter to me. I had previously read its contents on his brow.

"Can you imagine dear O——? In **** they are informed of all the relations of my master here, and slander has woven from them an abominable web of lies. They have heard with dislike, they write among other matters, that the Prince, some time since, had begun to disown his former character, and to assume a conduct directly opposite to his former laudable way of thinking. They knew that he had most dissolutely yielded to women and to play, that he had went deep into debt, lent his ear to ghost seers and sorcerers, that he was standing in suspicious relation to Catholic prelates, and kept a household that exceeded his rank as well as his revenue. It was even said that he intended to make this highly offensive conduct complete by an apostasy to the Roman Church. To clear himself of the latter accusation they expected his immediate return. A banker

in Venice to whom he should give a list of his debts, had an order to satisfy his creditors *immediately after his departure*, for under such circumstances they did not think it advisable to give the money into his own hands.

"What accusations, and in what a tone! I took the letter—read it over again and searched in vain for something that would soften its harshness. I found nothing. To me it was incomprehensible.

"Z*** reminded me of the secret inquiry that had been made of Biondello some time since. The time, contents, and all the circumstances agreed. We had erroneously ascribed them to the Armenian. Now it was brought to light whence it drew its origin. Baseness! But whose interest can it be to slander my master so exceedingly, and so stupidly. I fear that it is a piece of policy of the Prince of D***, who wishes to carry his point by removing our master from Venice.

"The Prince was still standing on the floor. His silence vexed me. I threw myself at his feet. 'For God's sake, most gracious Prince,' I exclaimed, 'do not determine upon any violent measure. You will—you shall have the most perfect satisfaction. Leave this matter to me. Send me there. It is beneath your dignity to justify yourself against such accusations, but allow me to do it. The slanderer must be named, and the eyes of the **** must be opened.'

"In this situation Civitella found me, who enquired with surprise the cause of our perplexity. Z*** and I were silent. But the Prince, who has long been accustomed to make no difference between him and us, was yet too much agitated to act with prudence at this moment, and ordered us to show him the letter. I hesitated, but the Prince snatched it from my hand and handed it to the Marchese.

"'I am in your debt, Marchese,' the Prince began, after the former had read the letter with surprise, 'but do not trouble yourself about it. Give me only twenty days time and you shall be satisfied.'

"'Most gracious Prince!' Civitella exclaimed in violent agitation, 'do I deserve this?'

"'You did not wish to press me. I acknowledge your delicacy and thank you. In twenty days, as I said, you shall be fully satisfied.'

"'What is that?' Civitella asked me, with consternation. 'What can be the matter? I cannot comprehend it.'

"We explained to him what we knew. He became very much excited. The Prince he said, should demand satisfaction.

Such an insult was never heard of. Meanwhile he conjured him to make use of his whole fortune and credit.

"The Marchese had left us and still the Prince had not said a word. He strode up and down the room. Something extraordinary seemed to work within him. At last he stopped and muttered to himself between his teeth: 'Congratulate yourself,' he said, 'at nine o'clock he died!'

"'Congratulate yourself,'—he continued, 'congratulate yourself. I shall congratulate myself. Did not he say so? What did he mean?'

"'How does that occur to you now? What has that to do here?'

"'I did not understand the man at that time. Now I understand him. Oh! it is intolerably hard to have a master!'

"'My dearest Prince!'

"'Who can make us feel?—Ha!—It must be sweet!'

"He paused again. His manner frightened me. I had never before perceived him thus affected.

"'The most miserable among the people,' he recommenced—'or a Prince next to the throne! It is all the same. There is but one distinction in mankind. To obey or to rule.'

"He looked again at the letter.

"'You have seen the man,' he continued, 'who dares to write me thus. Would you greet him on the street, if fate had not made him your master? By heavens! this crown must be something great.'

"In this tone he went on, and I dare not trust our discourse to a letter. But on this occasion the Prince disclosed to me a circumstance that surprised and frightened me very much, and that may have the most dangerous consequences. We have hitherto been in great error about the family relations of the *** Court.

The Prince answered the letter immediately, though I opposed it, and the spirit in which it was done, does not allow a hope of a friendly accommodation.

"You will now be curious, dearest O——, to learn something positive at last of the Greek lady; but about that I cannot yet give you a satisfactory account. From the Prince we hear nothing, because he is drawn into the secret and has, as I suppose, obliged himself to keep it. But we know that she is not a Greek as we supposed. She is a German of the noblest descent. A certain rumor that I had traced, gives her a very eminent mother, and makes her out to be the fruit of an unhappy love which has been much spoken of in Europe. Secret perse-

cutions of a powerful hand, according to this tale, have compelled her to seek protection in Venice, and this is the reason of her retirement, which has made it impossible for the Prince to find her out. The respect with which the Prince speaks of her, and certain marks of consideration which he observes towards her, appears to give force to the supposition.

"He is attached to her with a most violent passion, which increases every day. At first but few visits were permitted, but now, in the second week, they are but little separate from one another, and not a day passes that the Prince is not there. Whole evenings pass over that we do not see him, and though he may not be with her, still it is she alone that occupies him. His whole being appears to be altered. He walks like a dreamer, and all that used to interest him receives from him but transient attention.

"What will be the issue, dearest friend? I tremble for the future. The rupture with his court has placed my master in a degrading dependance upon a single man—the Marchese of Civitella. The latter is now master of our secrets—our whole fate. Will he always think as nobly as he does now? Will this good understanding continue, and is it proper even to confide in a man of the most exalted character, and of so much importance and consequence?

"Another letter has been sent to the sister of the Prince. I hope to be able to write to you of its success in my next letter."

The Count de O—— in continuation says: "But this next letter failed. Three months passed ere I received another letter from Venice—an interruption which was but too fully explained afterwards. All the letters of my friend to me were retained and destroyed. Judge of my consternation when I received at last, in December of that year, the following letter which a happy accident only (because Biondello, who had to deliver it, became suddenly sick,) placed in my hands.

"You do not write—you do not answer. Come—Oh! come on the wings of friendship. Our hope is gone. Read the enclosed.

"The wound of the Marchese is said to be mortal. The Cardinal broods vengeance, and his assassins look out for the Prince. My master! Oh! my unfortunate master! Has it come to this! Has it come to this? Undeserved, terrible fate! Like worthless men, we must hide from murderers and creditors.

“‘I write to you from the ——— Convent, where the Prince has found an asylum. He now reposes near me on a hard couch and sleeps—oh! the sleep of the most deadly exhaustion, that will only strengthen him for a new sense of his sufferings. The ten days that she was sick sleep never came to his eyes. I was present at the *post mortem* examination, evidence of poison was found. She will be buried to-day.

“‘Ah! dearest O——, my heart is broken. I have lived to see a scene that will never fade from my memory. I was standing at her death-bed. She departed like a saint, and her last dying eloquence was spent in leading her lover to that road on which she travelled to heaven. All our firmness was shaken. The Prince alone stood firm, and although in her death he thrice suffered death, he retained sufficient presence of mind to refuse to permit the last prayer of the dying enthusiast.’

“‘In this letter was enclosed what follows :

TO THE PRINCE.—FROM HIS SISTER.

“‘The only saving church, that has made such a splendid acquisition by the Prince of ***, will also not let him want the means to continue the way of living to which it is indebted for this acquisition. I have tears and prayers for the erring, but no more favors for the unworthy. HARRIET.’

“‘I took the stage at once, travelled day and night, and the third week I was in Venice. My haste was to no purpose. I had come to bring consolation and aid to the unfortunate. I found a happy man, who did not stand in need of my feeble assistance. F—— was lying sick, and I could not see him. When I arrived the following note was handed to me from him.

“‘Return, dearest O——, to the place from whence you came. The Prince wants you no more—nor me. His debts are paid—the Cardinal is appeased. The Marchese has recovered. Do you remember the Armenian, who knew how to confound us so much last year? In his arms you will find the Prince, who five days since heard the first mass.’

“‘I pressed to see the Prince, notwithstanding; but was refused. At the bedside of my friend I heard at last the dreadful tale.’”

THE END.

INSUBORDINATION;

OR,

THE SHOEMAKER'S DAUGHTERS:

AN AMERICAN STORY OF REAL LIFE.

BY T. S. ARTHUR,

AUTHOR OF "BELL MARTIN," "FANNY DALE," "THE TWO MERCHANTS," "SIX NIGHTS WITH
THE WASHINGTONIANS," &c. &c.

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INSUBORDINATION;

OR,

THE SHOEMAKER'S DAUGHTERS.

CHAPTER I.

AN INCIPIENT DEMONSTRATION.

"I'll not stand this any longer," said Bill Grimes.

"Nor I, neither," said Ike Wilson.

"I wonder how you'll help it?" responded Tom Peters, hammering a piece of leather to the tune of Yankee Doodle, and filling the shop with a din that drowned all voices for the space of the next five minutes.

"There are many ways to kill a dog without choking him," broke in Ike, as the noise of Tom's hammer and ringing lapstone subsided.

"That may be too, but you'll find old Lignumvitæ hard to kill, or I'm mistaken in him. He's a screamer when once raised; and I, for one, had as lief meet a bear, as to cross his path when his nap is fairly up."

"A hard bit and a steady hand, have cooled many a wild colt," said Bill,— "and 'll do it to the end of the world, or I'm mistaken."

"There's no use in your talking, Tom," said Ike, a little tartly—"You always were a chicken-hearted, babyfied sort of a feller, afraid of your own shadow of a moonlight night. Nobody asked for your advice, nor your help. Hardamer's an old tyrant, and his wife's as much of a she-devil as she knows how to be. We've stood their kicking and cuffing long enough, and would be fools to stand it any longer. But you can go on your hands and knees to them if you choose, and thank them for beating you; but for one, I set my foot down here, that old Lignumvitæ shant lay a feather on me from this day, henceforth and forever."

"Here's my hand to that!" said Bill Grimes, dashing his hard fist into the open palm of his worthy associate.

"I don't like the present state of things any better than you do," said Tom, who began to feel himself in the minority—"but I can't see

the use of a feller's putting his head into the lion's mouth. We can't hold our own against old Hardamer, and it would be fool-hardiness to try."

"There were many just such as you, Tom, in the glorious days of the Revolution; but all the prophecy of faint-hearted croakers, was nothing. Our Yankee boys had right on their side."

"But, right don't always make might."

"Poo!—Ain't here three of us, and any one of us a match for old Hardamer? Don't talk of might against right, if you please. But you needn't fatigue yourself, Tom, about the matter, if you're afraid! Ike and I can do thing to a charm. We're not afraid of the devil, tail and all."

"I reckon you'd find the Old Boy a queer chicken to deal with. But we'll let his majesty rest if you please," responded Tom. "I, for one, have no particular friendship for him; nor any particular desire to provoke his ill will by too much familiarity. Let's hear how you're going to manage affairs, and then I can tell you whether I'm with you or not."

"Comparisons are odious, so says the copy-book, but they are useful sometimes, you know, Tom, and, much as it may offend your ears, I must drag in your friend, his satanic majesty, by way of illustration. It's an easy matter to raise the devil, you know, but as there is no telling afore hand how he'll behave himself, there's no telling how a body will act in the case. Now, we have determined to raise the devil in old Hardamer;—how we shall manage him afterwards is yet to be told. No sailor knows exactly how he will act in a storm; but he would be a lubber indeed if he staid on shore until he settled the matter to his satisfaction."

"That may be all very true, Bill; but a good sailor would be very sure, before putting to sea, that all was right and tight aloft and aloft; and that there was ballast enough to keep all erect

in the worst storm. You know that Hardamer has law on his side, and that if he can't manage us himself, he can turn us over to a constable. I've no wish to have a taste of the whipping-post."

"This is a free country, Tom; and a pretty big one too. I'd find my way to the Rocky Mountains, before I'd wax another cord for the old rascal, if he attempted to play a game of that kind; and I'd tell him so, too. The fact is the law wouldn't justify him in the way he bully-rags and beats us all the while. There's two sides to a question, always—and of course there's two sides to this. If he'll treat us well, we'll treat him well. But 'wisey-wersey' if he don't."

"Well, I don't care if I join you," said Tom, who was not quite so headstrong as his fellow apprentices, but who, when he once set his head upon doing any thing, would show no hanging back.

"I thought there was something of the man in you, Tom," said Ike, seizing his hand and shaking it violently—"If we don't have a tea-party now with old Lignumvite, I'm a fool."

"Don't let's be in too much of a hurry about it, Ike," responded Tom, who liked to do things slow but sure.

"Strike when the iron's hot, is my motto," said Ike.

"You're both right, and mean the same thing," said Bill. "Let's lay low until old Lignumvite cuts up one of his high tantrums, and then I'm for being into him like a thousand of brick."

"Suppose we make this rule," said Tom, "that he shant flog us, and that we will snub him up, the first time he tries that trick."

"Agreed," said Bill, and

"Agreed," said Ike.

And the three worthies crossed hands in confirmation of the contract.

This little scene of incipient insubordination occurred some twenty years ago in Baltimore, in the back shop of a neat boot making establishment, on Market street, the owner of which carried one face all smiles and welcome to his customers, and another all frowns and harshness to his boys. His name we will call Hardamer. As an apprentice he had been hardly used; and having been taken while a very small boy from the almshouse, he had received no schooling previous to the time of his apprenticeship to the cordwaining business. By virtue of his indentures, he was to have been sent to school a certain number of months during his minority. But in his case, the indenture was pretty much of a dead letter, for all the schooling he obtained was at night, during the last year of his service. In this time he learned to read a little, and to write a cramped, almost unintelligible hand. Soon after he became free, having the love of money pretty deeply implanted in his mind, he opened a small shop, in a poor part of the town, and took one boy. By dint of hard

work, and close economy, he was enabled to live upon about one-half of his earnings, and thus gradually to accumulate a small capital. His progress, however, was very slow, and it was full twenty years before he was able to open on Market street. In the meantime, he had married a girl about as ignorant as himself, who felt her own importance growing as gradually as did her husband's property. They had been ten years in Market street at the time of the opening of our story, and were blest with a brood of six daughters, aged from seven to twenty years. These daughters, as they had grown up, had been accomplished in the arts of dancing, playing on the piano, doing nothing, &c. &c., and in consequence of these superior attainments, had a commendable degree of contempt for all young mechanics, and an exalted idea of any one who could write "merchant," or "M. D." after his name. The three oldest, Genevieve, Geneva, and Gertrude, were of the respective ages of sixteen, eighteen, and twenty; and were looked upon by their mother as perfectly accomplished, and ready to make charming wives for doctors, lawyers, or merchants, which ever might come forward and claim their willing hands.

We cannot say whether the reader will find them very interesting girls, but it is necessary that he should be introduced, and he must be as patient and polite as possible.

"I wonder, Ma," says Genevieve, the eldest, one day after dinner, while lounging at the piano, "why Pa don't quit business, it's so vulgar! I don't believe we'll ever get married while our parlor is within hearing of the shop, and the ears of our company stunned with the constant sound of the lapstone. How can Pa be so inconsiderate!"

"That's a fact," said Miss Gertrude, just turning the corner of sixteen. "Doctor Watson has never been to see me since that night when it was hammer, hammer, hammer, in the back shop all the while. I tried to apologize to him on account of it, and said it was so disagreeable; and that I would persuade Pa to move away or quit business, that he was rich enough to do without work. I wish, Ma, you would move up into Charles street, so that we could live like other people. I'm mortified every day of my life at the poverty-struck way in which we live."

Mrs. Hardamer was silent, for she did not know exactly what to say. She thought pretty much as her daughters did about matters and things, but she did not exactly like to bring her thoughts out into words before them.

"The fact is," again spoke up Genevieve, "I'm almost discouraged. I'm twenty, and have not had a single direct offer yet. And I never expect to have while things remain as they are. Pa don't appear to have a bit of consideration! If he'd only move into a bigger house away from this dirty shop, or quit business as he ought to do, and then give large parties, we might get our pick. But we'll get nobody

that is any body at this rate," and Genevieve heaved a long melancholy sigh, as she laid her head down upon the piano, at which she was sitting in abandonment of feeling.

"Never mind, girls," said Mrs. Hardamer, soothingly. "It'll come right by-and-by. We can't always have things our own way."

"It's a shame, Ma! it is so!" broke in Genevieve, lifting up her head, and exhibiting a face now covered with tears,—“and I don't care what becomes of me, so I don't! It can't be expected that I should do well without any chance, and I don't care who I marry, there! Just listen now!—Rap, rap, rap!—bang, bang, bang!—hammer, hammer, hammer! Oh! it makes me sick! this eternal ringing of lap-stone and hammer. I sometimes wish the shop would burn down, so I do!”

"Genevieve!"

"Indeed, and then I'm in earnest, Ma! If you will drive your children to desperation, you'll have no body to blame but yourselves. I'm determined that if Mr. Dimety don't offer himself before two weeks, I'll accept the first tailor or shoemaker that comes along. I'll marry, if I have to marry a drayman, so there now!"

"You mustn't give way so, Genevieve, my dear. Marrying comes natural enough; and when it's the right time, it will all go off as easy as can be. Have patience, my dear!"

"Patience!" responded the interesting Genevieve, jumping right up from the music stool and stamping with one foot upon the floor, while her face glowed like a coal of fire. "Havn't I *had* patience, I wonder? Its all well enough to talk of patience, patience,—but its another kind of a thing, I reckon, to see the commonest drabs of girls making the best matches, and we sitting at home with hardly a decent beau, and all because we live in such a way. I'll leave home, I will, if there ain't some change. I'm not going to be sacrificed in this way."

"And so will I," chimed in Gertrude.

"And I will too," responded Genevra.

"I wonder where my young ladies will go?" said the mother, in a quiet, sneering tone; for she was used to such exhibitions, and understood precisely how much they were worth.

"Go!" asked Miss Gertrude, with emphasis—“Go! why, go any where!”

"Well, suppose you go now," continued Mrs. Hardamer, who had grown a little irritated—"I don't see as you will find things very different if you stay here."

"And I *will* go, too, so I will!" said Genevieve, passionately, sweeping off to her chamber.

"Suppose you pack off with her," continued the mother, to the other two paragons, and they likewise swept off in high displeasure.

At tea time the three young rebels were sent for, and found asleep in their chamber. On putting their heads together, they concluded that an elopement, where there was no nice young man in question, would be rather a poor

business, and fell to crying, and finally slept the matter pretty well off, in the usual afternoon nap, which was prolonged an hour or two beyond the ordinary period.

When the young ladies appeared at the tea-table, their eyes, from which a long sleep had not stolen the redness, attracted their father's attention.

"Why, what's the matter with you; you've not all been crying I hope?" he said, looking from one to the other, of the three demure faces.

But neither of them felt like replying to their father's question.

"What's the trouble, Genevieve?" he continued, addressing the elder of the three.

"Nothing," she replied in a low moody voice.

"Nothing? Then I should think it was a poor business to cry for nothing. Come! speak up, and let me hear what's the matter. Can you find your tongue, Genevieve?"

But Genevieve's tongue had not the slightest inclination to fill its usual office.

"I don't understand this," said Hardamer, warming a little, and looking from face to face of the three girls—"Can you explain, mother?"

"O, there's nothing particular the matter," said Mrs. Hardamer, "only these young ladies are getting discouraged about their beaux. They think the sound of the lap-stone has frightened them all off."

"The devil they do!" said Hardamer, a good deal excited on the instant. "That is, they are ashamed of their father's business, and of course of their father. I wish in my heart they were all married to good, honest, industrious shoemakers."

"I'd die first!" broke in Genevieve, passionately.

"Then you'll not be likely to starve afterwards, as you will if you marry one of these milk-faced, counter-jumping dandies, about whom your foolish heads have all been turned. Please to remember, my ladies, that you are a shoemaker's daughters, and that's the most you can make out of yourselves. If your mother had put you in the kitchen, as I wanted her to do, instead of sticking you up in the parlor, you'd have been more credit to us and to yourselves, than you now are. Remember! I'll have no more of this kind of stuff."

There was a degree of sternness about the father's manner, that showed him to be in earnest, but his daughters had been taught manners in a higher school than that in which he had been educated; and they not only felt equal to their parents, but superior to them.

"I wouldn't be seen in the street with a shoemaker!" responded Genevieve, pertly, to her father's positive expression of disapproval.

"Do you know who you are talking to?" said Hardamer, in a loud, stern voice.

"Yes, sir!" replied Genevieve, in a quiet steady tone, looking her father in the face, and drawing in her lips with an air of self-possession and defiance.

"Leave the table this instant!" he said, rising and motioning her away.

"No! no! no! father!" said Mrs. Hardamer, also springing to her feet, and putting her hand upon her husband's arm—"don't do that! don't! don't!"

"Why, do you suppose, madam, that I'm going to let a child of mine talk to me in that way!"

"Sit down, sit down! she won't say so again. Ain't you ashamed of yourself, to speak so to your father!" she continued, addressing Genevieve, who still sat in her chair, apparently unmoved by the storm she had raised.

Hardamer resumed his seat, checked by his wife's interference, but by no means soothed in his feelings.

"It's a pretty pass indeed," he went on—"when a child becomes ashamed of her father. Here I've been toiling this thirty years at an honest trade, and now my children must be ashamed of the very means by which they were raised to a comfortable condition in life. I wish I'd had my way with 'em, there'd been other kinds of notions in their heads I'm a thinking."

"Well, its no use for you to talk, pa. Your business ain't very reputable, and you know it?" said Gertrude, unmoved by the excited state in which she saw her father.

"Ain't reputable, you hussey! what do you mean, ha?"

"Why don't you sell out, pa, and quit business, or open some kind of a store?" said Genevra, following up her sister's bold attack pretty closely.

The father was for a moment utterly confounded. His business had always been his pleasure, and it was yielding him a good income. He had never much liked the accomplishments displayed by his daughters, nor been especially pleased with the foppish, frivolous young fellows who dangled about them. Now they had left their own peculiar domain and had invaded his; and he was chafed to a degree that made it impossible for him to command himself. Springing up from the table, he resisted all attempts made by his wife to check him, and, in a loud, angry voice, ordered the three girls to leave the room instantly. For a moment they looked him in the face hesitatingly, but they saw something there that they did not wish to trifle with, and slowly obeyed the order.

"Not reputable!—quit business!—ha!—indeed!—not reputable," ejaculated Hardamer, pacing the room rapidly backwards and forwards. "This comes of making ladies out of shoemaker's daughters. Not reputable!—I'll have 'em all binding shoes before a week! I'll show 'em what's reputable!"

"H-u-s-h, husband, do!" said Mrs. Hardamer, in a soothing voice.

"Indeed, and I'll not hush! and its all your fault, I can tell you, my lady! You would make fools of them, and now they're ashamed of us. Quit business! Keep a store! Not reputable!"

Indeed! Quite a new discovery!" and old Hardamer hurried off into his shop, in a state of perturbation such as he had not experienced for years.

"How could you talk so to your father?" said Mrs. Hardamer, joining the three oldest girls in the parlor, and leaving the younger Misses to take care of themselves.

"How could he talk to us about marrying shoemakers?" replied Genevieve, tartly, giving to her face at the same time an expression of strong disgust.

"If he's got no higher ideas, I can assure him his daughters have," said Gertrude. "Marry a shoemaker, indeed!"

Now this was almost too much for Mrs. Hardamer herself, for had'n't she married a shoemaker? And was'n't the father of these high-minded damsels a shoemaker? Still, she cared as little to have shoemakers for sons-in-law as did her daughters to have them for husbands. This latter consideration modified her feelings in a degree, and she replied,

"Nonsense, girls! your father was only jesting. But you should remember, that in speaking as you do, you reflect upon him!"

"That's not our fault, you know, ma," said the incorrigible Genevieve. "If he will continue to follow a business that necessity compelled him to adopt many years ago, now that there is no occasion for it, he must not wonder if his children are mortified. And then to talk of putting us back to the point where you and he started from, was too much for human nature to bear."

"Genevieve, you musn't talk so!"

"Its the truth, ma! and I must speak it out."

"It is not always necessary to speak even the truth."

"In this case it is. To talk of marrying me to a shoemaker! Give me patience to bear the thought!"

"Genevieve!"

"Ma!"

"I won't put up with this any longer. So just let me hear no more of it."

"But, ma!"

"I tell you to hush!"

"Yes, but!"

"Don't you hear me?"

"Ma, is this the way to con—"

"Genevieve, I command you to be silent."

"I can't be silent, ma—and I won't be silent!" now screamed Genevieve, and the hysterical feminine octave. "Talk of marrying me to a shoemaker! Oh, I shall go crazy!"

"A good, honest, industrious shoemaker would be a fool to have you, let me tell you, you proud, lazy, good for nothing hussey," said Mrs. Hardamer, in a voice pitched to the same key with her daughter's. "Your father is right! I've made fools of you all, but I'll bring you down, see if I don't!"

"It would be hard to get any lower, I'm thinking," remarked Genevra, with provoking

calmness. "I feel disgraced all the while, for isn't the hammer ringing in my ears eternally."

"Yes, and the whole house is scented with leather and varnish," said Gertrude. "Who wonders that young gentlemen soon slack off. What's the use of attracting attention abroad, if receiving company at home spoils it all?"

"Will you hush, I say!"

"No, ma, I can't hush! Hav'n't we borne this, and met with disappointment after disappointment, until we are driven to desperation. There's that elegant young Williams, who was just on the point of declaring himself, when, as luck would have it, he must call upon me here; and then the cake was all dough, for he never came again. And last week I saw him at Mr. L——'s party, all attention to Grace Jameson, a pert minx; and he only gave me a cold nod. Don't I know the reason of all this? Give me patience!"—and the disappointed lady of sixteen stamped upon the floor with her little foot, in a towering passion.

"I can't stand this," said Mrs. Hardamer, completely subdued by the tempest she had called about her ears; and beat a hasty retreat, leaving the wounded dignity of the young ladies to heal as best it might.

Upon returning to the breakfast room, she found that the younger children had finished their meal; and she set about preparing supper for the apprentices. Upon the table were two plates, each containing what had been once the half of a half pound print of butter, but now somewhat diminished in size. One of these plates she took off; and cut the butter in the other plate into two pieces, and removed one of them. A plate of chipped beef was also taken off, and a bread basket containing a few slices of wheat bread. Nothing except the plates and the tea things were left. From the closet she now brought out the half of a large cold Indian pone, and placed it on the table.

"Call the boys!" she said, in a sharp, quick voice, to a black girl, who soon passed the word into the back shop, and four boys, with three of whom the reader is already acquainted, made their appearance. The other was a small lad, not over eleven years of age; a puny child, with fair complexion, and large bright blue eyes. He was an orphan boy, and the drudge of the whole house and shop. One, whose young heart had known enough of affectionate regard, to create in it a yearning desire for kind looks and kind words;—but few of these warmed it into even an instantaneous delight.

Placing herself at the head of the table, Mrs. Hardamer turned out the luke-warm wishy-washy stuff she called tea, and then sat in moody silence, while the boys stowed away, with a kind of nervous rapidity, the cold heavy slices of pone, just touched with the butter, which they had to use sparingly to make it last, and washed the mouthfuls down with the not very palatable fluid.

It so happened that the warm weather had

awakened into remarkable activity certain troublesome little animals in the boys' beds; and Ike had been deputed by the others to inform Mrs. Hardamer of the fact, in the hope that some speedy remedy, made and provided for like necessities, would relieve them from their annoying visitors. This information, Ike had determined to convey at supper time, but the lowering aspect of Mrs. Hardamer's countenance, for a time, made him feel disinclined to perform his allotted duty. Gradually, however, he brought his resolution up to the right point, and suddenly startled that lady from her unpleasant reverie with the announcement—

"The clinchers are as thick as hops in our beds, ma'am."

"Catch 'em and kill 'em, then," was the brief and crabbed answer.

Ike was silent, but his blood rose to fever heat.

"Short and sweet, wasn't it, Ike!" said Tom, as the boys met in the shop after supper.

"Catch 'em and kill 'em, ha! I'll catch 'em, but somebody else may kill 'em, if they choose," said Ike, giving his head a knowing toss.

That night at bed-time Ike appeared with a little paper box, in the top of which was cut a small hole.

"What are you going to do with that, Ike?" said Bill.

"Going to catch clinchers. Didn't the old woman say we must catch 'em?"

"Quite obedient, Ike. You're improving!"

"People ought to grow better as they grow older," responded Ike, turning up the hard straw bed with one hand, and routing the young colonies of clinchers that had settled around the pegs of the bedstead. With a very small pair of pincers he caught the nimble animals, and thrust them into his box. For nearly an hour, he worked away with all diligence, assisted by the rest, until he had caught and caged some two hundred.

"What are you going to do with these, Ike?"

"That's tellings just now. Let me alone for a day or two, and then I'll show you a neat trick."

"But, what is it, Ike?" urged Bill.

"Never mind, now, Bill. You shall know time enough."

Sealing up the small aperture in the top with a piece of shoemaker's wax, softened in the candle, Ike deposited the box in his trunk for safe keeping.

Three days after he came into the shop with his prisoners.

"There'll be some fun to-night, boys, or I'm mistaken," he said. "Let's examine our captives."

Slowly removing the lid, the little animals were found lying upon the bottom of the box, to all appearance dead. Their deep red color had changed to a light brown shade, and they looked more like thin, dry flakes of bran, than any thing else.

"They're all dead, Ike.")

"Don't believe the half of it. Just look here, and I'll show you if they're dead."

Picking up one of the seemingly inanimate, thin flakes, he placed it on the back of his hand, where it could hardly be distinguished, by its color, from the skin. For a moment it lay there motionless, and then its fine legs began to quiver, and its head to move and bend down upon the skin of the hand. In a little while its head was perfectly distinguished by a small brown spot, and from this spot a thin dark line began to run down its back. Gradually this line widened, and the whole back assumed a darker hue.

"Does he bite, Ike?"

"Don't he! See how he is sucking up the blood! He's about the keenest chap to bite I ever felt."

Ike still allowed the little animal to draw away, until he was swelled up with the dark fluid, and almost ready to burst; then brushing him off, he remarked in a low, chuckling voice,

"Somebody'll know more about clinchers to-night than they've ever known before."

"But what are you going to do with these bed-bugs, Ike? you haven't told us yet."

"Oh, haven't I? Well, I'm going to let 'em have a taste of the old woman, after their long fast."

"You're joking!"

"Humph! The old lady won't think so to-night."

"But the old man'll come in for a share."

"Who cares! If he will go into bad company, he must take the consequences. But he's as bad as she is, any day."

After dinner Ike watched his opportunity, and slipped into the royal bed-chamber, while all were down stairs. Carefully turning up the bed-clothes from the foot, he scattered the two hundred half-starved bugs between the sheets, so low down, that in turning the clothes over from the top to get into the bed, they would not be perceived.

"Did you do it, Ike?" said Bill and Tom, eagerly.

"In course I did."

"They'll never find out who did it."

"No. They'll not even suspect any body."

The garret in which the boys slept, was directly over the chamber of Mr. and Mrs. Hardamer, and when they went to bed they left their door open, to hear as much as possible of what should happen below.

About ten o'clock the old folks retired, and were just about losing themselves in sleep, when they were each awakened by a burning sensation about their feet and ankles. They bore it for a while in silence, and tried to go to sleep again; neither being aware that the other felt the same annoyance. But the burning increased to a smarting and stinging, and soon covered nearly their whole bodies.

"I feel just like I was in the fire," said Mrs. Hardamer, who was first to complain.

"So do I," said her husband. "There must be bugs in the bed!"

"Indeed and there can't be, then, for I looked the bed all over to-day."

"There must be, by jingo!" exclaimed Hardamer, in reply, reaching suddenly down and scratching his leg with all his might.

"Something's the matter!" said the old lady, rubbing with a like earnestness, and then creeping out of bed.

A light revealed about twenty lively fellows, who had, in the short time allowed them, filled themselves pretty well, and now stood out in full relief from the snow-white sheets. These were caught and dealt with according to law. The bed was examined, and in the belief that there was not another live animal on the premises, the worthy couple again betook themselves to rest.

But they were soon forced to turn out again, smarting, burning, and itching all over. Thirty or forty more of the ravenous little creatures were discovered, and killed, and the bed and bedstead again thoroughly hunted over.

Again did they seek to find rest; and again were they forced to leave their snug retreat. This time they abdicated their chamber and sought for repose in another room and in another bed. Here they were more fortunate, and after a few efforts to drive from their imagination the idea that bugs were all the while creeping over them, finally succeeded in falling into a sound slumber, from which they did not awake until daylight.

At breakfast time, while the boys were disposing of their cold pone, and weak, warm, rye coffee, Mrs. Hardamer asked if they were troubled much with bugs during the night.

"Not at all, ma'am," said Ike, with a grave countenance.

"I never was so troubled with them in my life," said Mrs. Hardamer.

"I didn't feel any, did you, Bill?" said Ike.

"I wa'n't at all troubled," responded Bill, in a voice that trembled with suppressed mirth.

"Well, I had to go into another room. I never saw so many in a bed in all my life! They must have all come down in an army from the garret."

"There's a pretty large army of 'em up in the garret, that I know," said Ike; "but they kept pretty quiet last night."

"Well, I'd thank 'em to keep on their own side of the house," responded Mrs. Hardamer, with an expression of disgust; for the idea of having clinchers from the boys' dirty beds creeping over her was by no means a very pleasant one.

That day the garret had a thorough overhauling. The bedsteads were taken down and scalded, and some thousands of bugs slain. Upon a close inspection of the sheets of her bed, the old lady discovered a number of what she thought the skins of bugs. These she gathered up carefully, and threw them into boiling water. She

was a little surprised to see many of them stir, which created some vague suspicions in her mind; but there the matter ended. After this the beds in the garret were regularly examined every week during warm weather.

CHAPTER II.

A MOVEMENT NOT TO BE MISTAKEN.

"Did you ever see such a proud, lazy, stuck up somebody as Genevieve is?" remarked Ike, one day, to the boys in the shop.

"I do believe she's ashamed of her own father, because he's a shoemaker," responded Tom.

"Humph! I know she is!" said Bill.

"And there's Gertrude, too. She never thinks of knowing me in the street on Sundays. But I guess I always speak to her as polite as a dancing-master," said Ike. "I like to cut the comb of such people."

"Ain't you afraid to do so?" asked Tom.

"Afraid, indeed! And what should I be afraid of? She can't help herself. Suppose she tells the old man? She'll only get a flea in her ear for her pains. He's not going to do any thing."

"Jim said he heard Millie say, that all three of the fine young ladies had a high-top-tea-party with the old man and woman about the noise of the lap-stone when they had company. Old Hardamer was as stiff as you please, and said he'd set 'em all to binding shoes before a week, if they didn't take care."

"I wonder if that's a fact! Are you sure Millie told you so, Jim?"

"All I know about it, Ike, is, that Millie said so, and I 'spose she knows," said the little fellow, in half apparent reluctance to make any communication on the subject.

"Ah, very well!" responded Ike. "They shall have lapstone enough after this. But, won't I lay it on with a vengeance, when the young doctors, and lawyers, and counter-hoppers are about!"

"They're what they call accomplished, ain't they?" said Bill Grimes. "What do they mean by that, I wonder?"

"You're green, Bill, if you don't know what accomplished means."

"I reckon I do know, Ike, what it means. But I can't for my life understand what it means when applied to old Lignumvitæ's three oldest daughters! If it means to play on the piano, why the wife of black Jake, the barber, is accomplished, for Jake says she can play the forty-piano to kill. And she can beat either of our young ladies, if I'm any judge of music, for I heard her once, and you know we hear them until we're sick and tired. If it means to dress up in all kinds of flim-flammeries, Jake's wife

is just as accomplished, for she sports as much finery as they do. Or, may be it is to sit all day in the parlor, and do nothing; if so, Mrs. Morton's Spanish poodle is just as much entitled to be called accomplished as they are. I must find some new meaning to the word before I can understand its application."

"Nonsense, Bill! you're soft in the upper story. To be accomplished, means to dance, and talk poetry, and all that sort of thing. A perfectly accomplished lady can talk nonsense, and to save your life you can't tell it from good sense; it will come out so gracefully. She will tell you that you are a fool or a puppy in terms that leave you at a loss to know whether she means to compliment or insult you. A queer animal, I can tell you, is an accomplished lady."

"Of course, then," said Bill, "our up-stairs misses are not accomplished ladies."

"No, nor never will be, in full. They can ape a few of the graces, but can never be accomplished inside and out. A shoemaker's daughter, Bill, always seems to hear the sound of the lap-stone, and it makes her both look and feel awkward. She will do well enough, if she is content to be herself; but the moment she tries to step above the path in which she walks easily and naturally, she will get on uneven ground, and wobble from side to side like a duck,—every body will laugh at her."

"That's a law of nature, Ike."

"Of course it is, Bill. Shoemakers' daughters are as good as any body else's daughters, until they grow ashamed of being shoemakers' daughters, and then they ought to be despised, and are despised."

On that same night it so happened that the girls had company, and as it was in the summer time, all the doors in the house were open for the free circulation of air. The boys, of course, did not work at night, and the girls fondly imagined themselves freed from the dreadful annoyance of the hammer and lap-stone. But they were not to be so highly favored.

"Where are you going to-night, Ike?" said one of the boys to this young ringleader of mischief.

"I'm going to stay home, I believe."

"Stay home! why what's in the wind, Ike? It's a new kick for you to stay home at night."

"Why, didn't you see that the girls were all furbelowed up at supper time. They're going to set up for company—doctors, lawyers, merchants, &c."

"Well, what of that?"

"Nothing, only I want a pair of shoes, and must beat up the soles to-night."

"You're not in earnest, Ike?"

"Indeed, and I am though. I want these young gentlemen to hear the sound of the lap-stone."

"The old man 'll walk into you, if you try that trick."

"The Iron Chest Society meets to-night, you know, and he never stays away."

"True enough; but the old woman 'll be into you."

"Well, suppose she is; the mischief will all be done before she can waddle into the back shop."

"But I wouldn't if I was you, Ike."

"Wouldn't you, indeed! But I would though."

"As long as the girls hate the sound of the hammer so badly, I'd let 'em alone."

"Why, what's come over you, Tom! You're grown mighty feeling all at once! But you needn't preach to me, I can tell you! I know what I'm about. Won't I make the old stone ring a merry tune, though!"

As Ike had indicated, about eight o'clock, a young Mr. Willis, who had just opened a dry goods store, came in to see Miss Genevieve; and shortly after a student of medicine, a wild rake of a fellow, who had an idea that old Hardamer had a few of the "gooseberries," as he called them, dropped in to renew an acquaintance recently made at a party with Miss Genevieve. His name was Anderson. A Mr. Wilkins also called, but as he was a young shoemaker, just in business, who did not think himself above shoemakers' daughters, he met with a very cold reception.

"It's quite a pleasant evening, Miss Gertrude," remarked Mr. Wilkins, the last comer, as he seated himself beside that young lady.

"Yes, sir," she responded, in a chilling tone, and with a face as free from smiles as a wintry sky.

"Not much danger of a gust, I reckon," he continued, glancing out of the window.

"No, sir."

"It's been rather an oppressive day."

"Yes, sir."

"Have you been to the museum, lately?" continued Wilkins, varying his attack. "They have an Egyptian mummy there, the first ever exhibited in this city."

"No, sir," replied the monosyllable lady, as coldly and indifferently as possible.

Still, Wilkins was not to be driven off into silence, although he felt awkward and embarrassed.

"That's a beautiful painting there of the death of Virginia."

"Yes, sir."

"Were you ever electrified?"

"No, sir."

"You've no idea what a strange feeling it produces. You feel just as if your shoulders were jerked apart. How singular it is, that in a circle of even twenty, every one feels the shock at the same instant. They electrified a big negro there the other night. It was fun, I assure you! Mr. Peale charged the machine pretty strong, and asked the fellow to put his hand on a knob. He, of course, did as requested,

in all obedience. 'Now take hold of that chain a minute,' said Mr. Peale, and the negro obeyed. I thought the whole company would have died laughing to see the fellow jump and roll up his eyes. He couldn't understand it no how at all. 'Shut your big mouf, Mr. Pictor,' he said, shaking his fist at the two laughing portraits in the room where the machine stands, 'You've no 'casion to laugh!'"

Even this failed to interest the young lady, and she did not accord a single word in response.

During this vain effort on the part of Mr. Wilkins to get up a conversation, the tongues of the other girls were running at a rapid rate; and as they grew more and more animated, their voices were raised to a higher pitch.

"He's a splendid writer, though, ain't he, Mr. Anderson, that Mr. Byron?" said Genevieve. "O I've a passion for him!"

"Lord Byron is certainly a poet of splendid powers," responded the young student.

"He's a lord, then, is he?"

"O yes, Miss."

"Well, I declare! I didn't know it before. I shall admire him more than ever!"

"You've read his Bride of Abydos, I suppose?" said Anderson.

"I haven't got that far yet," replied Genevieve, blushing a little.

"Then there's a treat yet in store for you. His Bride of Abydos is one of his most beautiful productions."

"I'll read it to-morrow, then; I won't wait 'till I get to it. He's the author of Grey's Elegy in a Country Church Yard, ain't he?"

"Yes," said the polite student, "and it is one of his finest pieces."

"I've always admired that. Ain't it elegant where he says,

'Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air!'"

"Indeed it is," responded Anderson, a little cooled off; but thoughts of the old man's "gooseberries" warmed him up again.

"You're fond of reading poetry, Miss Genevieve."

"O I doat on it! It's a passion with me! I could read poetry from morning 'till night."

Rap, rap, rap,—bang, bang, bang, suddenly came ringing up from the back shop with startling distinctness!

"Goody gracious me!" said Genevieve, suddenly thrown off her guard, and rising to her feet.

Anderson, with easy politeness, endeavored to carry on the conversation, as freely as if there was no deafening sound of lapstone and hammer ringing through the room. But not only Genevieve, but all the girls were terribly annoyed.

"That's quite a familiar sound," remarked Wilkins, in a quiet tone.

Gertrude looked at him as if she could have annihilated him.

"Your father is pretty busy now, I believe?"

"Sir!" said the young lady, with an offended air.

"Can't you give us something on the piano, Miss Geneva?" said Mr. Willis, who felt for the girls, and suggested the idea of music, as an antidote to the annoying sound below.

"Yes, I will play, if you wish me to," responded Geneva, moving quickly towards the instrument. "What will you have?"

"Washington's march," said Willis.

Instantly Geneva struck the keys with full force, introducing the drum whenever she could manage to give it a deafening bang, and thus succeeded in drowning the noise of Ike's hammer. But marches, like every thing else must have an end, and in the pause that succeeded, the ears of the poor girls were agonized by the terrible sound below.

Another tune was quickly called for, and during its performance Genevieve left the room, and descended with rapid steps to the back shop.

"What do you mean, sir! you insolent puppy you!" she half screamed to Ike, who, seated on his bench, with a shade over his eyes, was still hammering with all his might.

Ike looked up with a simple, bewildered air, but made no answer.

"What are you filling the house with this eternal din for, I want to know?"

"Nothing, Miss Genevieve, only I'm making myself a pair of shoes. You see I've got none fit to wear," poking up at the same time his foot, on which was an old shoe the toe of which gaped like the mouth of a cat-fish.

"Then why don't you make your shoes in the day time, and not disturb every body in the house at night?"

"Cause I aint got no time in the day."

"I'll tell Pa on you, so I will!" said the incensed young lady."

"Why, I ain't done nothing, Miss Genevieve," replied Ike, as demurely as possible. "But if it disturbs you, I'll do it in the morning." And so saying, he replaced his hammer upon his bench, pushed the stone under it, and threw off his pasteboard shade.

"Don't let me hear any more of this, remember that, sir!" and the offended beauty swept off so quickly as to lose the sound of Ike's humble "No Miss."

"It worked to a charm!" he exclaimed, as soon as Genevieve had retired; and hurrying on his jacket, he blew out the candle, and in a moment or two was in the street.

On the next morning after breakfast, old Hardamer went into the back shop and, standing before Ike, addressed him in a loud angry tone with—

"What were you doing here last night, I want to know?"

"Only hammering out a shoe sole."

"Well, what business had you hammering out a shoe sole at night, this time of year?"

"I wanted a pair of shoes, sir!"

"That's a lie, sir! for it's not two weeks since you made yourself a pair."

This was a poser, for it was a fact.

"You only did it to disturb the family, you imp of Satan! But I'll learn you a trick worth two of that! I'll let you see that you can't play off your pranks on every body!"

And before Ike had time to do any thing, Hardamer was laying it over his back and shoulders with a heavy stirrup. The old fellow was a cruel hand to flog when once excited, as the scarred and seamed backs of the boys bore ample testimony; and he was terribly passionate whenever he met with opposition.

Recovering himself from the surprise and confusion of so sudden an attack, and recalling his resolution to resist, Ike suddenly sprung from his bench, and driving his head full into the rotund abdomen of his master, sent him tumbling over backwards into the corner among the lasts and rolls of leather.

Uttering a fierce oath, Hardamer sprung quickly to his feet, and made towards Ike, who stood calmly by his seat, waiting for the result of his bold innovation upon ancient usages. Blind and mad with passion, the short, thick, old fellow, plunged like an enraged bull towards Ike, who coolly stepped aside, and by just advancing his foot a little, allowed him to tumble heels-over-head into the other corner of the shop. There he lay for some moments, so bewildered as to scarcely know whether he was on his head or his feet. But he soon began to understand the position of matters a little more clearly, and seeing Ike still standing boldly up in front of him, he rose up, with a last in each hand, and, in the twinkling of an eye, launched them, one after the other, at Ike's head. But that chap had as quick an eye as his master, and readily dodged them.

"Two can play at that game, remember!" said Ike, picking up a last and brandishing it in his hand.

For a moment Hardamer was utterly confounded. Implicit submission to his will, and the privilege of thrashing any one of the boys whenever he pleased, had been prerogatives which no one had questioned for twenty or thirty years.

"Do you dare to threaten me? you scoundrel!" he at length said, moving towards Ike, his face dark with anger.

"Stand off, sir!" said Ike, retreating.

But Hardamer pressed forward, and, finding that warning would not keep off his master, Ike let fly a last at his head. It just grazed his ear. In an instant the old fellow grappled with him, and they rolled over together on the floor. Bill

and Tom looked on with anxious interest, both resolved to aid Ike, according to the compact, if there was any chance of his master's getting the best of the battle. All at once they saw Ike grow black in the face, and were shocked to perceive that both of Hardamer's hands were tightly clasped around his throat.

"The old scamp will kill him!" exclaimed Bill, springing forward and throwing himself upon his master.

"Choke him off, Bill!" cried Tom, joining him on the instant.

Not taking the hint as quickly as Tom thought the nature of the case required, he clasped his own hands with a vigorous grip around Hardamer's throat, and held on, until the master's hold relaxed from the neck of the now almost insensible boy.

Ike quickly revived, and the three boys retired from their not very pleasant proximity to the body of their master, and ranged themselves side by side in an attitude of defiance.

"I'll murder the whole of you!" shouted Hardamer, rising to his feet, mad with passion. What do you mean? you infernal scoundrels! Go to your work this instant! and you, Ike, walk off up stairs. I've not done with you yet."

"There's no particular use in my going up stairs," said Ike. "Because, you see, I'm not going to allow you to touch me again, I'm a most too old for that now."

"Hold your tongue, you scoundrel!"

"Well, I was only saying that—"

"Hold your tongue, I say! Off up stairs with you!"

"Can't go, sir," said Ike.

"We might as well all understand each other at once," now broke in Tom. "We've all resolved that we won't stand your eternal beatings any longer. We've had enough; and, as Ike says, are too old for that kind of fun, now. If you'll treat us well we'll work; but if you don't, we'll raise the very devil; so there now!"

Here was a state of things, the possibility of the existence of which had never entered the mind of Hardamer, and he felt utterly at a loss how to act. If he had followed the impulse by which he was prompted, he would have dashed in among them and knocked right and left with blind fury, but he could not forget that these three nimble chaps before him, in whose determined faces there was no evidence of fear, had but a moment before proved too much for him.

"I can have you all cowed by a constable," he said, in a calmer voice.

"We have calculated all that," replied Tom, more respectfully, "and are prepared to act in that case, too."

"I should like to know how you'd act in the officer's clutches. I guess you'd not like his cowlid much."

"I can tell you how we'll act," said Tom, in a determined voice. "We'll never wax another cord for you as long as we live. Mind, sir,

we're not to be fooled with!" he continued, anxious to impress his master with a sense of their indomitable resolution; and thus avoid future contentions, which none of the boys had any desire to enter into.

Hardamer turned upon his heel and went into the front shop, while the three rebels retired, each to his respective seat, and resumed their work. He was as much at a loss to know how to act, as they were to know how he would act. At one moment, he resolved to avail of the law which provides for the punishment of refractory apprentices; but the determined manner of the boys caused him to hesitate. Although he was in pretty easy circumstances, he by no means considered himself rich, and had no idea of dispensing with the services of three well grown and pretty industrious boys. This turmoil in his mind, accompanied with its troublesome indecision, continued for many days, during which time the boys worked steadily and quietly. Gradually the keen mortification, and chafed feelings of Hardamer, wore away in some degree, and the boys began to feel safe.

"The storm's pretty well over," said Ike, about a week afterwards. "Who'd 'a' thought the passionate old rascal would have been cowed so easy."

"Tyrants are always cowards," said Tom. "Just make 'em lay aside their bluster, and all's safe."

"It's jubilee now, I s'pose," added Bill. "No more of his confounded weltings. Hurrah!—hurrah!—hurrah!" he continued in an animated voice, swinging a boot-leg about his head.

"Hush, Bill, the old fellow will hear you, and it's no use to provoke him without a cause. We are not altogether on dry ground yet. A little false play may do the business for us."

"I'll fight 'till I die before I'll give in now," said Ike. "Still he's a fool to fight when he can have peace by being a little quiet, and lose nothing neither."

"It's my opinion," said Tom, "that the old man wa'n't so much to blame in calling you to account t'other morning. But then, we'd resolved to snub him up the first time he went to cutting up any tantrums, and so it came all in good play."

"I've got it so often when I didn't deserve it, though," responded Ike, "that it's put the old Scratch into me. If our Old Harry-of-a-boss had treated us right all along, he'd had none of this work on his hands."

"That's true enough. He has no one to blame but himself. Tyrants make rebels. Boys know what's what as well as any body."

"Humph! I reckon they do," added Bill. "Do you think Thompson's boys would ever raise on him? No indeed, he's a reasonable man, and treats 'em well."

"But he has one boy, though, you know," said Tom, "who hates him as he does a snake; and says he's a canting old hypocrite."

"Who's that, Abe Shriver?"

"Yes."

"We all know what he is. Didn't Mr. Thompson pick him up out of the gutter, and make him all that he is? I hate an ungrateful fellow, and I hate Abe Shriver!"

"But he says Thompson is a hypocrite, Bill," continued Tom, "and that he cheats his customers every day, if he does have prayers night and morning."

"You don't believe him, though, do you?"

"Why shouldn't I believe him, Bill?"

"Why, just because Abe is a mean, low fellow, and had as lief tell a lie as the truth."

"How would you like to live with Parker, down South street, Bill?" said Tom, jumping to another subject.

"I wouldn't live with him; that's all."

"They say his boys have a pretty tough time of it."

"Yes. Harry Sands who lives there, says, that they're worked 'most to death, and half starved into the bargain. And I should think so, for they all look as yellow and lantern-jawed as bull frogs. They are never allowed a bit of butter, and no bread for dinner. Mrs. Thompson cuts off for each boy one slice of meat at dinner time and then takes the dish off. Potatoes make up the bulk of the meal. They did get a pudding once, but Harry said their stomachs wa'n't used to it, and it made 'em all sick."

"I wonder they'll stand it."

"Boys'll stand a good deal sometimes to get their trades."

"But what I wonder at, is," said Tom, "that boys, after they know their trades, will continue to submit to such treatment. I'd tramp in less than no time."

"Several have run away. But run-away apprentices rarely do well, and this fact is pretty generally known, and talked about in shops."

"There's Wells, the tailor; a clever fellow to his boys, they say. If all I hear is true, I'd like to live with him," said Bill. "It does one good to look at his jolly, good-humored face."

"Tom Brown lives there, don't he?"

"Yes. Tom says he never flogged him in his life, though he's often deserved it. Once Tom staid out all night, after Wells had positively forbidden him to do so. 'Where were you last night, Tom?' he asked, angrily, the next morning. 'I was at my aunt's,' said Tom. 'Hav'n't I positively forbidden you to stay out at night?' 'Yes sir,' says Tom. 'Then, what did you stay out for?' 'Because I wanted to,' replied the scamp. 'I'll break this up, I know,' says Wells, 'here, take this eleven-pence and go and get me a cowhide. I'll teach you to mind me!' Tom went off and bought the cowhide, and brought it in with a demure countenance. His beeswax happened to be all out, and knowing his master's propensity to laugh at the ludicrous, he handed him the long, slen-

der cowhide, saying at the same time very gravely and earnestly, 'Please, sir, to give me a tip to buy some wax.' Wells tried to keep in, but it was no use. He roared right out, and Tom escaped into the back shop with a whole skin."

"Wells is a prime chap, there's no doubt of that," said Ike. 'I'd almost consent to be a tailor to live with him, much as I despise the pale-faced craft. No man with perfectly formed legs ever ought to be a tailor, that is my doctrine. It will do well enough for cripples and women."

"But they look upon us with contempt, and call us snobs," said Tom.

"Yes, and the chimney sweep despises the miller; but the world can see where the honor lies."

"There is something manly in our trade, any how," responded Tom, hammering his favorite tune of Yankee Doodle on the lap-stone, and silencing all conversation for the next minute or two.

"You're right there, Tom," said Ike, as the noise subsided. "A boot-maker is as much above a stitcher, as a merchant is above a cheesemonger."

CHAPTER III.

A MATRIMONIAL SPECULATION.

"What do you think of Genevieve?" said Willis to Anderson, drawing his arm within that of the latter, as they left the residence of Mr. Hardamer, after spending from two to three hours there on the night the girls had been so distressingly annoyed by Ike's hammer and lap-stone.

"She's rather tough to swallow, Willis, but then the old man's got the 'gooseberries,' and I'm devilishly in want of money."

"Well, if you want her, stand up like a man, and she's yours."

"But how's the old chap? Is he at all comat-able? because, you see, Genevieve with the rhino and Genevieve without the rhino, are not in my eyes one and the same person."

"I understand. But I don't know exactly about that matter. He's an industrious, hard-working old fellow, and I should judge that he would not look with very favorable eyes upon a young student of medicine, who may or may not graduate in the next twelve months, and then has no practice on which to support a wife."

"That does look a little blue; but then he needn't know all that. It's easy enough to talk of my father's splendid farm in Virginia, stocked with five hundred niggers; where we will go and live like a lord and lady."

"I suspect he's too old a bird to be caught with chaff; still, the game's worth shooting at."

"I can bring down the game easy enough. But then I don't want an empty craw, you see; that's the big business."

"You'll have to feed Genevieve up, and trust to her stuffing the old man. She'll believe any story you can tell her."

"Yes, I see that. She almost coaxes me to deceive her. But tell me, have you any notion of Geneva?"

"Not exactly!"

"What takes you there, then?"

"To pass the time away, of course. I have twenty young ladies that I call on every month. I should be sorry if I was suspected of having a notion to all of them."

"What do you think the old fellow is worth, Willis?"

"That's more than I can tell, I'm sure."

"But, what do you think? I've heard his property estimated at a hundred thousand dollars. Do you think he is worth that much?"

"Hardly. And even if he was, it wouldn't go far among six daughters."

"He hasn't that many, has he? I thought there were only three."

"Yes he has, though. There are three younger ones."

"Bless us! That alters the case. I've been calculating on a neat little plum valued at something like thirty thousand dollars. With that much I could afford to have the poetical Miss Genevieve quartered off upon me. But half that sum is too little."

"I've no idea that he's worth a hundred thousand dollars, myself," said Willis. "He may be, but I doubt it."

"What reason have you for doubting it?"

"No particular reason—it's only a notion of my own."

Anderson went home to his room that night, and found upon his table three letters, each containing an earnest demand for money. His pockets were empty; the small sum allowed him by his father for his incidental expenses having been all squandered away weeks before, nothing more he knew could be expected in that quarter before the usual period, for his father was a poor farmer in Virginia, who found it as much as he could do to meet the expenses of a large family at home, and spare from his slender income the sum of five hundred dollars a year, to carry his son through a course of medical studies in Baltimore. That son, as may be supposed, but poorly appreciated the sacrifice which a fond father made to give him an honorable start in the world. Already he had spent two years and a half in Baltimore, and in the ensuing winter he must offer for graduation. How little he had improved his time, may be known from the fact, that his perceptor had but a few weeks previous to his in-

troduction to the reader, felt it his duty to admonish him in strong terms, and to represent it as being very doubtful whether he could get a diploma, unless he applied himself with vigorous attention for the next few months. His own case seemed to himself to be rather a hopeless one, in view of accumulated debts, and accumulated desires. And the only remedy he could hit upon was to marry a rich wife. He had tried for some time to get introductions to rich girls, but the few he had met seemed to take but little fancy to him, until accident threw him in the way of Miss Genevieve Hardamer. The usual question, "Is she rich?" always asked by him, on being introduced to a new face, having been answered by the pleasing information that her father was worth at least a hundred thousand dollars, he determined to follow up in the pursuit without delay. He was somewhat disappointed in the lady, and a little dampened in his ardor by the information that the interesting sisters were six in number. But after reading over his dune, and reflecting seriously upon the prospect before him, he came to the conclusion that, as it was the first fair chance for a rich wife, he had met with, he had better not let it slip.

On the third evening after his visit, he called, a second time on Miss Genevieve, and, on leaving at eleven o'clock, proposed a walk with her on the next evening.

"I shall be most happy to walk out," she said, hardly able to keep down her exuberant feelings at the idea of having, at last, got a nice young fellow snared.

Punctual to his engagement, Anderson called and in a few minutes, Genevieve's arm was trembling in his. They extended their walk, as it was a bright moonlight night, out Calvert street to the Waterloo row, and then crossed over into Belvidere street, and out to the bridge. This was, at that time, a very fashionable evening walk, and hundreds strolled out every moonlight night.

Anderson modified his voice to the gentlest and softest tones, and talked of brooks and fountains, and green meadows, until Genevieve's poor head was almost turned. He frequently alluded to his father's beautiful seat in Virginia, and spoke of it as a little paradise. His sisters, he said, were dear good girls, and were all impatient for him to return home.

"How I should like to live in Virginia," said Genevieve, as Anderson dwelt upon the lovely spot he called his home. "I have always admired the Virginian character."

"They are a fine, frank, hospitable people. Somewhat proud, it is true. But then, we have something to be proud of," said Anderson, elevating his head, and stepping forward with a bearing as dignified as he could assume.

"Virginia's a great ways off; more than a thousand miles, ain't it," asked Genevieve.

"Oh, no. It's not a hundred miles to some parts of it. Our place is about two hundred miles from here."

"Is that all? La! I always thought it was such a distance! How long does it take to go there?"

"I can easily go home in a couple of days. You go down the Potomac river in the steamboat."

"Ah, indeed! Is the Potomac a river? Why I always thought the Potomac was a tavern. I heard father say, once, when he went to Washington, that he staid at the Potomac House."

"That tavern was called after the river. The Potomac is a splendid stream running into the Chesapeake Bay."

"I've often heard of this Chesapeake Bay; where is it, Mr. Anderson? But, perhaps I'm too inquisitive."

"Don't you really know where the Chesapeake Bay is, Miss Genevieve?" asked Anderson in astonishment.

"Indeed, I do not, sir. I never was very proficient in geography. It was such a dry study. I remember a little about the maps; and before I left school could easily find places, when our mistress would point out on the edges of them the latitude and longitude. But I never could recollect much about it, except, that Greeland and Lapland were in the North Pole; and that the Torrid Zone was situated in the Autumnal Equinox."

Anderson felt too solemn to laugh; for it was no pleasant discovery for him, that the only being who was likely to make him a rich wife, was, as near as could be, a fool.

He did not make any answer, and she ran on:

"Our teacher used to tell us that Italy was shaped like a boot, and I remember tracing the red and blue lines all around it with a pin one day; but I never could find it again, though I have often looked all over my old school atlas for it. Byron used to live in Italy. When I found that out, I was anxious to see it on the map. We were talking about Byron the other night. I've read the *Bride of Abydos* since I saw you. It is a glorious thing!"

"There is no doubt of that," said Anderson, pleased that Genevieve had so promptly read the poem after his recommendation.

"You said just now that you would like to live in Virginia," continued Anderson. "Were you really in earnest?"

"Indeed I was," she replied, trembling all over, and pressing closer to his side. "I've always had an idea that it was a delightful place. Pokerhontas, the Indian Queen, lived there once."

"How would you like to go there?" he said, acting upon a desperate resolution to bring matters to a speedy close.

"I should like it of all things in the world," replied Genevieve, fully understanding her part.

"If I were to ask you to go there with me, what would you say?" he continued, advancing a little nearer to the point.

"How should I go with you, Mr. Anderson? I don't understand you!" she said, in feigned surprise.

"Go as my wife, of course! You don't know how dear you are to me, Genevieve. I couldn't live without you. Since I first saw you, I haven't slept an hour at a time, and to-night I am determined to know my fate. Don't say no to my suit, or I shall die, dear Genevieve!" he continued, taking her hand. "Have I any thing to hope?"

"Oh, sir! Oh, sir! I shall faint! Who'd 'a' thought it! Don't let me fall!" ejaculated the astonished maiden, leaning her full weight against her enamored swain. "There! Let me sit down!" she continued in a faint voice.

It so happened that they were at the bridge when this scene occurred, and Anderson gently eased her down upon one of the stone elevations that rise at each end.

"Oh, dear!—oh, dear!" she continued to ejaculate, in an agitated manner. "It took me so suddenly!"

Gradually she recovered herself, and soon cast upon Anderson most loving glances.

"I have won the prize!" he said, pressing her hand to his heart, as his eyes caught the meaning looks.

"I loved you from the moment I first saw you," she said, more calmly; "but dared not to hope it was returned."

"You are dear to me as the apple of my eye, and have been from the first," replied Anderson, in passionate tones.

But enough of this. That night, neither Genevieve nor her lover, as he had declared himself, slept much. She, from excess of delight, had no inclination to sleep, and he, from very different emotions, lay awake hour after hour. At times he repented of the rash step he had taken; but his embarrassed condition would then stare him in the face, and reconcile him to the revolting necessity. He could not conceal from himself that he had the most unconquerable aversion for Genevieve, but it was quite as apparent, that he had a tender regard for her father's money. But the old man could not fancy him, and when he asked for his daughter, gave him a peremptory denial. He had his own reasons for this. It was useless to talk to him of his rich father in Virginia. He knew too much about his unpaid tailor's and boot-maker's bills.

Presuming upon the forgiving disposition of all fathers, Anderson proposed an elopement, and in two or three weeks from the time old Hardamer had refused to give the hand of his daughter to a young, idle, spendthrift, that daughter, who thought herself a little wiser than her father, took the responsibility of giving herself away.

Since her father's refusal to countenance the

visits of Anderson, he had ceased coming to the house. But Genevieve had contrived to meet him at a friend's, and one night, at eleven o'clock, she failed to return home as usual. Her absence, up to that hour, was thought to be nothing remarkable, for all the girls were in the habit of running about with beaux, or visiting at the houses of acquaintances, until ten or eleven o'clock almost every night.

After sitting up until one o'clock for their sister, Gertrude and Geneva became alarmed on account of her absence, and awakened the old folks.

"Where *can* she be, Gertrude?" asked the mother with a strong expression of anxiety.

"Indeed, ma, I can't tell. She never staid out so late before."

"Has she ever seen that graceless chap, Anderson, since I forbid him the house?" asked the father, abruptly.

"Yes sir, I believe she has seen him pretty often since," said Geneva.

"Then the matter's explained!"

"What do you mean?" asked Mrs. Hardamer, in alarm.

"Why, its as like as not she's run off with that idle student, she's fool enough!" replied Hardamer, angrily.

"It's impossible!" said the mother, bursting into tears.

"Don't believe the half of it! She's been crazy for a husband these five years, and has been ready, for some time, to take the first offer," responded Hardamer, bitterly. "If she really has married that fellow, though, she must not expect any thing from me, for I shall have nothing to do with him or her either." And so saying, the incensed father retired to his room.

For an hour longer did the mother and the two daughters sit up, in the vain hope that Genevieve would return. As the clock struck two, they all retired with heavy hearts.

About ten o'clock on the next morning, a letter was brought to Hardamer, which, upon breaking open, he found to run thus.

"DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER:—Will you forgive your child for her first act of disobedience. Contrary to your wishes and commands, I have married Mr. Anderson. He is all you could desire in the husband of your daughter. Only consent to cheer us with your smiles and approval, and we shall be too happy. But if you will not forgive your child, she will never more know peace or contentment. I am at Mrs. —, and am trembling with anxiety to hear from you.

Your affectionate child, GENEVIEVE."

"It's just as I suspected!" said Hardamer, entering the room in which his wife sat sewing. "The huzzy has married Anderson in spite of us!"

"You cannot be in earnest!" exclaimed the mother, dropping the work from her hands.

"Yes, but I am, though. Just listen to this!" and he read her the letter he had just received from Genevieve.

"She's made her bed and she can lie in it, that's all!" said her mother, resuming the work that had fallen upon the floor.

"So say I! Let her eat the bread of her own baking!" and Hardamer turned away abruptly, and entered the shop.

"Have you sent the letter yet?" said Anderson to his young wife, on the morning after the marriage.

"Yes, love, an hour ago."

"Ain't it strange that none of 'em have come yet."

"It takes the girls a good while to dress, and I suppose they're all coming along. They'll be here pretty soon, now."

"Do you think there's any danger of your father's being stiff about the matter," he asked in a tone indicating some concern.

"O no, love, none in the least. He'll be quiet enough, now its all over."

"I hope so."

"Never fear, I know him," said Genevieve. Another hour passed, and yet there had been neither visit nor message.

"What can it mean, Genevieve?"

"I can't exactly understand it, love," she answered, her face indicating considerable anxiety.

"Perhaps your messenger did not deliver your letter to the right person. Suppose I call him up and question him."

The boy who was sent with the letter was now called and interrogated. He testified, that he knew Mr. Hardamer very well by sight, and that he had placed the letter in his own hands.

"Surely they will not cast you off!" said Anderson, after the boy had retired.

"Impossible!" responded Genevieve, emphatically.

"What can it mean, then?"

"Indeed I don't know," said Genevieve, bursting into tears.

Anderson shook his head, and the young couple sat for ten minutes in moody silence.

"We've got each other, love," at length said the bride, looking up into the face of her husband, and twining an arm around his neck—"They can't rob us of each other, and we will be happy in spite of their cruel neglect."

This was a view of the case that was not at all flattering to the mind of Anderson. The more intimate had become his acquaintance with Genevieve, the more intolerable did she appear, viewed apart from the "gooseberries." He did not, for he could not, return her fond caresses, or respond to her affectionate expressions. This coldness, so unexpected, completely turned the current of the young bride's feelings, and she burst into tears.

"You don't love me, I'm sure you don't!" she said, laying her head upon his shoulder.

"You are dear to me as life!" he instantly

replied, drawing his arm tightly around her, for he could not so suddenly give up the cherished idea of sharing with her a few of her father's hard-earned dollars.

"Then I am so happy!" she said smiling through her tears.

A whole week passed and not even an inquiry, so far as they could find out, had been made after them, by any of Genevieve's family. Urged on by Anderson, she had written home three letters in the interval, but they all remained unanswered. At the end of that time, Genevieve, at the suggestion of her husband, determined to go home, and try to reconcile matters. The announcement in the newspapers, of his having married old Hardamer's daughter, brought down upon him all of his duns, who, from long fasting, had become as hungry and as importunate as wolves. This state of uncertainty, therefore, could not long be endured; more particularly, as his landlady had become a little pressing about her dues. Much against her will, for Genevieve was more incensed than troubled about the neglect of her parents and sisters, did she proceed, a week after her marriage, to her father's house. Her two grown up sisters were, as usual, in the parlor, one reading a novel, and the other thrumming the piano.

"Well, Genevieve!" drawled out Gertrude, not even rising. Genevieve did manage to come forward, and offer her hand.

"Where's Ma?" she asked, in considerable agitation.

"Gone to market," again drawled out Gertrude, turning over a music book, and resuming her practice.

"Will she be home soon, Genevieve?" Genevieve ventured to ask, her eyes filling with tears.

"I expect she will, she's been gone a good while. Won't you take off your bonnet?"

"No, I believe not. I can't stay long."

But few more words passed between the sisters for the next half hour, at the end of which time Mrs. Hardamer returned.

"Who sent for you, my lady?" was the salutation with which she met her daughter.

Genevieve looked at her for a moment, and, bursting into tears, arose and left the house, without the least effort being made to detain her.

"If ever I go back there I wish I may die!" she exclaimed, passionately, on entering the chamber, where sat, in all impatience, her expectant husband.

"What do you mean?" he asked in alarm, rising to his feet.

"I mean what I say! They didn't treat me like a human being, and I'll never go near 'em again!"

"Did you see the old man?"

"No, I did not."

"But, why didn't you see him?"

"Because, there'd a' been no use in it!"

"But you don't know that. No man can be

hard-hearted enough to turn away from his daughter, when she asks for his forgiveness."

"I've nothing to ask his forgiveness for. Besides, you don't know him as I do. He's as stubborn as a mule when he once sets his head."

"But you never said this before! You always held out the idea, that he'd be easily enough managed, after it was all over."

"Well, suppose 'en I did. It was only to ease your mind on the score of the great sacrifice I was making."

"The devil it was!" ejaculated Anderson, in undisguised astonishment.

Now, this was too much for any young bride to bear, before the honey-moon was over, and she very naturally gave way to a flood of tears.

A weeping wife is never a very interesting sight to a husband, more especially, if there is but a trifle of real love in the case; and this effusion of tears had but little effect upon the heart of Anderson, save to harden it towards her.

Rap, rap, rap, sounded on the door, and Anderson opened it with some misgivings.

"Mr. Wilson says, can you let him have that money to-day?" said a dirty little urchin, in a loud voice, pushing a bill at him.

"Tell Mr. Wilson to go to —!" replied Anderson, slamming the door in the boy's face, and retreating to a chair, at the opposite side of the room from where his wife was sitting.

His words fell like ice upon the heart of Genevieve. A suspicion of the real truth flashed across her mind. Could it be possible that she had been deceived? But she dashed the dreadful thought from her mind.

After sitting for half an hour in silence, Anderson took his hat, and left the house without saying a word. He felt completely caught in his own trap. If she brought nothing with her, what was he to do with a disagreeable wife, especially, as he had not a single dollar in the world, and was over head and ears, as the saying is, in debt.

"A fine spot of work this, any how!" he muttered to himself, as he hurried along the street. "If that old rascal ain't brought to reason, I shall have to run away, or hang myself."

"Good morning, Mr. Anderson! You are the very man I am looking for," said a well known officer, smiling blandly as he addressed the young student.

"I can't say that I am much delighted at seeing you, then."

"That's hardly fair, Mr. Anderson. But, jesting aside. There's a little affair of yours down at squire Miltenberger's, that I wish you'd arrange some time to-day."

"Whose is it?"

"Old Lawson's, the bootmaker. He's a little impatient to share in your good fortune," replied the officer, smiling at his own humor.

"It's the last time I'll patronize the old scoundrel," said Anderson, in an offended tone.

"But, never mind; I'll arrange it before night."

"Do, if you please," said the officer, bowing, and again Anderson was moving along with no companion but his own thoughts.

"A cursed fix I'm in, now, ain't I?" he said, half aloud. "A rich wife, and not a copper with her. But it's folly to despair yet. The old snob 'll come to, by and by; he's only acting a little stiff, to show off. He ought to be proud of the connection!" And the young man walked along with a dignified pace, for the next half square, in the pride of self-consequence.

But, Anderson was mistaken. Hardamer was so incensed at his daughter, and so displeased with all he could learn of Anderson, that he would take no notice of them. After two months, during which time the young couple lived in open rupture, Anderson found it impossible longer to keep free from jail. Waiting just long enough to get his quarterly remittance, of one hundred and twenty-five dollars, from his father, who had been kept in ignorance of his marriage, he pocketed the money, and left the city. He did not even leave a note behind for his wife.

A sad time, poor girl! had she of it afterwards. On the third day after Anderson had failed to make his appearance, his wife received notice from her landlady to leave the house, as she could not afford to keep her any longer for nothing. This communication was made in no very choice terms, and wound up as follows:

"And, if you'll take my advice, you'll go home to your father, for not much good 'll ever come to you of living with Mr. Anderson, let me tell you that, even if he should show himself again; though I've no notion that ever he will."

Genevieve burst into tears, and cried and sobbed as if her heart would break. This exhibition of distress, touched, in some degree, the feelings of the landlady, and she said, with more kindness of manner—

"I didn't mean to hurt your feelings, Mrs. Anderson,—I wouldn't do that for the world. But, I'm serious, when I tell you as a friend, that you would build on a vain hope, if you calculated much upon a return of your husband. He's over head and ears in debt, here, and has gone off, I have little doubt, to get clear of it."

"Don't talk to me in that way, madam! You cannot, surely, be in earnest? But, even if he has gone home to Virginia, he will send for me directly."

"His father, if I am rightly informed," replied the landlady, "is a poor farmer, with a large family, who has stinted all the rest, to make a doctor of this one. Having trifled with his father's kindness, and abused his confidence, he will hardly go back to him."

"O madam! what you say cannot be true!" exclaimed Genevieve, the tears flowing afresh from her eyes.

"It is all too true, Mrs. Anderson, and sorry am I to have to tell you so. Anderson expected to get a fortune with you, but having been dis-

appointed in this expectation, and being overwhelmed with debt, he has left you."

There was too much evidence in Genevieve's mind to enable her to reject, fully, her plain-spoken landlady's statement, and, overwhelmed at the idea of her situation, she covered her face with her hands, and rocking her body backwards and forwards, murmured—

"What *shall* I do! What *shall* I do!"

"Go home at once to your father, Mrs. Anderson," said her landlady.

"But father won't see me, nor suffer me to come to the house."

"Then you *are* in a bad way, poor thing!"

"Mayn't I stay here a little while, ma'am," she said, meekly, looking through her tears, imploringly, into the landlady's face.

The feelings of the latter, not usually very sensitive, were touched, and wiping the moisture from her eyes, she said—

"Certainly, Mrs. Anderson, for a little while. But, you know, I can't afford to keep you long; and so you'd better make fair weather with your folks as quick as possible."

If there is anything of good remaining in the heart, circumstances of trial and affliction will develope it. It may lie hidden for years, like fire in the steel, but rough collision will reveal the spark. This is one of the principal uses of adversity.

"I have done wrong," said Mrs. Anderson, mentally, after an hour's afflictive communion with her own thoughts. Now, this simple conclusion and acknowledgement, indicated that beneath all the false pride and vain desires of Genevieve, there lay, concealed, some good principles, by which she might be elevated from an evil and a false into a good and a true character. Had these shown themselves under different circumstances, they might have been trampled upon, and extinguished. But they were kept concealed and protected until the right moment.

CHAPTER IV.

A NEW CHARACTER INTRODUCED.

"Here, Jim, run to Mrs. Earnest's with these 'uppers,' and tell her I wan't 'em closed and bound as soon as possible," said Mr. Hardamer, handing a bundle to his smallest boy, who took it, and ran off at full speed.

"Mr. Hardamer wants these"—began little Jim, as he was always called in the shop, on entering Mrs. Earnest's room; but he stopped short on perceiving her daughter Anne, seated in a chair, weeping violently.

"What's the matter, Miss Anne?" he asked, after a moment's pause, going up to her side. Anne had always been kind to him, and he liked her very much. For a few moments the

weeping girl made no answer to the inquiry of her little friend.

"O, Miss Anne, what is the matter?" again asked the boy, his own eyes filling with tears. "Where is your mother?"

"She is dead!" murmured the girl, sobbing more violently.

"O no, Miss Anne!"—But his eye turned involuntarily towards the bed, and perceived the pale, death-stricken face of Mrs. Earnest. Bursting into tears, he leaned his head against the chair, on which Anne was sitting, and wept with her. He, too, had lost a friend in Mrs. Earnest. For, since the death of his mother, she was the only one he had met, who seemed to care for him with something like a maternal regard.

Mrs. Earnest had long been in feeble health, and had been wasting away for years in a slow decline. But death came more suddenly than he had been expected. Her husband, a physician, who had not succeeded in obtaining a very large practice, had been dead for many years. In dying, he had left his intelligent and interesting wife, with one daughter, about six years old. The little that he had been able to accumulate, did not last the widow long, and Mrs. Earnest was soon thrown upon her own resources, for a support for herself and child. By careful economy, and constant industry, she had contrived to keep her head above water, and, at the same time, to send her child to school until she was eleven or twelve years of age. About this time she began to feel seriously the inroads of a concealed but fatal disease, and it became necessary to tax Anne's young strength and patience in daily toil with her needle.

The little girl, who had a deep affection for her mother, and had often been led to notice the weariness and evident pain with which she toiled on from day to day, gladly entered upon the task allotted her, and, though often fatigued and restless from long application, she never complained.

Year after year passed away, and, from one kind of work to another, they had changed, until, at last, they confined themselves to closing and binding shoes, as requiring less of wearisome application than ordinary sewing. At this they managed to support themselves comfortably, for their wants were few.

"I must go, Miss Anne," said the little boy, lifting his head from the chair against which he had leaned it. "Mr. Hardamer'll beat me if I stay long."

"Poor child!" ejaculated Anne, forgetting, for the moment, her own sad condition. "I'm afraid you have a hard time of it, Jimmy."

"O no, Miss Anne, not very. Only, I'm beat so, sometimes. But, I must run back. I'll come again to-night."

"Do come, I shall want to see you,"—and as the pale, sorrow-stricken face of the child disappeared, her own thoughts went back again to

the keen affliction she had been called to endure. But a few minutes before the little boy came in, her mother had heaved her last sigh, and she was, now, friendless, and alone with the dead. For nearly an hour she sat in almost perfect abandonment of feeling, but a sense of the duty yet left to her to perform towards all that remained of her mother, roused her from her stupor, and she called in a kind neighbor, who, with others, assisted in the last sad offices of preparing the dead for burial.

On the evening after the funeral, Anne found herself all alone, in the room where for years she had been used to see the dear face, and hear the kind words of her mother. And she was not only alone, but friendless. There were none to whom she could look for protection, and no place to which she could go, and call it her home. While busy with sad thoughts, and painful forebodings, the boy who had brought the work the day before, came in. He was but a small boy, and she was in the early bloom of womanhood, but his face was, to her, a welcome one.

"Good evening, Miss Anne," he said, entering without ceremony.

"How do you do, Jimmy? I'm glad to see you, for I feel very lonesome."

"I thought you would be lonesome, and so I came," replied the little fellow, in simplicity of heart.

"You're a very good boy, Jimmy, to remember me, now I'm in trouble."

"I can never forget you, Miss Anne, for when every body beat me, or made fun of me, you were always good to me, and just like my sister, that's been dead, O, so long!" And the boy stood before her, with the tears streaming down his cheeks, in remembrance of those who, while living, loved him, and cared for him.

"You had a sister, then, Jimmy," said Anne, forgetful of her own affliction, in sympathy for the sorrow of the child.

"O, yes. And she was so good to me! But she was sick a long time, and when mother died, there was no one to take care of her. I was a little, little boy, and couldn't do nothing. And so the people put us into a cart, and sent us out to the poor-house. There they took sister, and put her in a room full of sick people, and wouldn't let me stay with her. I cried and cried to stay with her, and then they beat me so hard with a stick; and the man said he'd kill me, if I didn't hush. I was afraid to cry loud after that, but I used to lay awake most all night long, sometimes, a thinking of sister, and crying all to myself. 'Mayn't I see sister! O, please let me see sister!' I said to the man, after I'd been there eight or nine days. He looked at me cross for a while, and then he said, a little easy, and didn't look so cross, that if I'd be a good boy, and not cry any more, for the tears were running down my cheeks all I could do to help it, that I should see her the next day. All that night I slept but little, thinking about

seeing sister; and I tried not to cry, but I cried all the while.

"Next morning I was up so early—it was hardly daylight, and I waited and waited for the man to come and take me to see sister. But hour after hour passed away, after breakfast, until dinner time came; and I hadn't seen her yet. Two or three times the man came into the room, but I was afraid to say anything to him, for fear he'd be angry. But I looked him in the face as wishfully as I could, though he didn't take no notice of me. It was most night when he came in again, and he walked about the room as unconcerned as if nobody's heart was a'most breaking, like mine was. Every minute I expected him to call me to go and see sister; but he didn't seem to remember his promise. When he turned to go out, I thought I couldn't stand it any longer, and so I went right up to him, and putting up my hands, as if I was going to say my prayers, said—"O sir, do let me see my sister!" He turned around so cross on me for a moment, and then looking towards the woman who took care of our room, said, 'Here, take this brat in to see his sister,' and whirled around quick, and went out of the room.

"The woman looked at me as if she didn't care whether she did or not,—then she caught hold of my arm and said—"Come along, and be quick too!" She almost dragged me along the passages, and up stairs to the sick room where sister was. But I didn't mind that. All I cared about was seeing sister; and in a moment or two I was by her side. O how much paler and thinner she was! And her big bright eyes looked into my face so strangely. But she was so glad to see me; and took me in her arms and held me tight to her bosom, and kissed my face all over. And then the tears rolled down her cheeks, and she shut her eyes, and was still for a good many minutes, but her lips moved all the while. 'Come, that'll do!' said the woman, 'I've no time to be fooling here,' and she took hold of me to pull me away. Sister, she looked so anxiously in the woman's face, but it didn't do no good, for her heart was cold and hard. 'Let him come again, won't you?' said sister, in a low voice. 'I don't know that I will, you make such a fuss over him,' said the woman, and lifting me down from the bed, she dragged me away.

"I didn't do nothing but cry all that night, and all the next day, too, and the man said, if I didn't hush, he'd half kill me, and said I shouldn't see my sister any more, if that was the way I acted. I stopped crying all at once; that is, outside, but I seemed to be crying inside all the while. In about two weeks more I got so impatient to see sister, that I made bold to ask the man again. 'What's that?' said the woman, who heard me. 'Jim wants to see his sister again,' said the man. 'He's a fool!' said the woman, 'his sister's been dead these ten days.'

"I didn't cry nor say nothing, Miss Anne;

but I can't tell you how I felt. I wanted to die too. O, it would have seemed so good, if I could have died. I staid there a good while, when Mr. Hardamer came out one day, and said he wanted a boy; and then they bound me to him. He and Mrs. Hardamer scold me, and beat me so much, that I sometimes wish I was dead, and then I should be with mother and sister."

The poor little fellow now covered his face with his hands, and sobbed violently, while the tears trickled fast through his fingers. For some time, Anne's affliction was all absorbed in her sympathy for her little friend; but this gradually subsided, and she felt keenly her desolate condition.

"What are you going to do, Miss Anne?" said the boy to her, after his own feelings had revived a little from their great depression.

"Indeed, Jimmy, I don't know what I shall do."

"I heard Gertrude say this morning, that they wanted somebody to come there and sew. I wish you'd come; I know they'd like you."

"I will think about it, Jimmy," she replied.

"But, may be, Miss Anne, they'll get somebody else if you don't speak quick. Won't you come to-morrow, and see about it?"

"I don't know, indeed, Jimmy; I can tell best, after I have thought about it."

"O, I wish you would come!" said the little boy, as he thought more seriously of the matter. "I would be so happy."

The earnest desire expressed by her humble friend, and the sympathy she felt for him, influenced the decision of Anne in a good degree. On the next day she called on Mrs. Hardamer, and an arrangement was soon entered into for her to come and sew for a dollar and a half a week.

This happened about the time of Genevieve's abandonment by her husband. The circumstances of her marriage and desertion were noised about among that particular class of individuals who are interested in such matters; and, as it was very well known that the girls held their heads a little too high, it afforded a subject for no little ill-natured gossip. Some few pitied, while others secretly rejoiced at the bad fortune of Genevieve. As soon as her parents ascertained that Anderson had fairly gone off, they took her home, but evinced little sympathy for her condition. Mrs. Hardamer, Genevieve, and Gertrude, were too deeply mortified to regard her feelings. All hope of an elevation of the family by her marriage was cut off. She was irrevocably tied to a worthless fellow, from whom they had only to expect disgrace and annoyance. Any scarcity of gallants, was sure to be charged, by the girls, upon Genevieve.

"It's all owing to your miserable connection with that fellow," said Genevieve to her, one evening, after having sat up for company, all furbelowed off, in vain. "No man that thinks any thing of himself is going to marry either

Gertrude or me, now you've brought such disgrace upon the family."

"I wish the puppy'd been in the North Pole, before he came about here," added Gertrude. "I always knew he was an impostor."

"Yes, and Genevieve might have known it, too," resumed Genevra, "if she hadn't been so mad for a husband. But, I reckon she's got enough of it, and, I can't say that I'm much sorry either, if it wasn't for the disgrace to the family."

Genevieve made no reply to these cruel remarks; but they entered her heart. She was too deeply afflicted to feel resentment, and she knew it would be of no use to complain. Anne was present when the remarks were made, and she at once retired to her chamber. There she was soon followed by Genevieve, who had been assigned a portion of Anne's bed. She was not considered worthy to occupy the same room with her two grown up sisters; and she, by no means, regretted the banishment.

Anne was seated at a small table, reading, when Genevieve came in; and, as the latter at once sat down by the window, and leaned her head upon her arms, she read on. In a few minutes, she was conscious that Genevieve was weeping bitterly. Closing the volume, which was none other than the Holy Word, she drew near to Genevieve, and, with a tender concern, which could not be misunderstood, took her hand and said—

"When all our friends forsake us, there is One who still looks kindly upon us and loves us."

Genevieve made no answer, but the tears fell faster, and she sobbed more convulsively.

"It is only through affliction, Mrs. Anderson," continued Anne, "that we can know ourselves. And this knowledge, if we make the right use of it, is worth all we suffer. In all our sorrows, there is One who stands very near, and permits the sorrows to come upon us. But, although the floods prevail, he will not let them overwhelm us. Our Heavenly Father loves us with a deeper and a wiser love than our earthly parents possibly can love us, and, surely, he will let nothing harm us, if we will look up to him in child-like confidence and submission."

Genevieve grew calmer, and seemed to listen with deep attention. Anne continued:

"All affliction is for use. When we fall into these deep waters, we should not despair, but look into our own hearts, and see if we cannot find some evils there which we could not have perceived without the affliction. And, most certainly, my dear madam, we should not look in vain. When we see that there is an evil there, that has ruled too slavishly our former life, and been, perhaps, the real cause of our present sorrow, it is for us to try and withdraw our love from that evil, and to endeavor to put it away. If we do this with a sincere effort, and at the same time ask our Heavenly Father

to take it away, because it is offensive to him, it will be removed entirely, or, in a degree corresponding with the sincerity of our desire to have it removed. Do you understand me, Mrs. Anderson?"

By this time Genevieve had ceased to weep, and was listening with earnest attention. She replied in a low tone;—

"Not altogether, Anne; but, what you say sounds as if it might be true. I have never heard any body talk so before. But, I am very miserable,—Oh, I am very miserable!" and she clasped her hands together, and again burst into tears. This time, she laid her head upon Anne's shoulder. For a few minutes the latter made no attempt to check the current of her feelings; but, as Genevieve grew more composed, she said—

"There can no more be pain of mind, without mental disease, than there can be pain of body without a bodily disease. The pain is simply a call for some remedy. If there were no pain, externally or internally, in either case, the individual might die suddenly, naturally or spiritually, without having been conscious of the existence of any disease. This pain that we feel, is, then, a merciful provision, and we ought, always, to consider, seriously, what it means, and profit by the lessons. You say you feel miserable; if all were right within, you could not feel miserable."

"But who could feel happy, Anne, under all the circumstances that surround me. Forsaken by my husband, and treated unkindly in my father's house."—And again she gave way to a flood of tears.

"That is to be expected, Mrs. Anderson," said Anne, after a pause of some moments, in which Genevieve grew calmer. "The man who suffers with a violent pain, cannot be indifferent to it, simply because it makes him conscious that he has a disease, brought on by some particular act of indiscretion; but, then, it may discover to him, in its true light, the folly that brought on the disease, and cause him to avoid it in future. So in the case of great mental agony, arising from circumstances of affliction. By it, we are enabled to see that we have acted from wrong motives, and thus blindly run into trouble; or, we have cherished in our hearts, a false estimate of things, and loved them purely with a selfish love; and, when they have been removed, there has been nothing upon which we could lean for comfort. Such discoveries, followed by a correction of long formed evil habits of the mind, secure for the future a measure of true happiness."

"Anne," said Genevieve, lifting up her head, and looking her young adviser in the face, with something of surprise and admiration, "you are a strange girl, different from any that I have ever met. Where did you learn these things, that sound so much like truth; and yet, are to me, new, and almost incomprehensible."

"I had a good mother," replied Anne, her

voice trembling as she named the dear maternal name, "and she had known much sorrow. In the school of affliction, she had learned wisdom. I loved that mother," again her voice trembled, "and knew, that whatever she told me, was truth. The nature, and cause of affliction she taught me, and since she has been removed from me, I have found them blessed lessons. But, it must never be forgotten, Mrs. Anderson, while thinking of these things, that, apart from a religious principle of obedience to the Lord, we never can be happy. The Lord is our creator and our father; and, as our father, loves us with an unspeakable love. In his Word, he has told us in what way we should act to be happy. These laws are not merely arbitrary laws, but are grounded in love and wisdom, and any departure from them, as a natural consequence, brings misery. This misery is not a punishment direct from our heavenly Father, sent in anger for our disobedience; but is, as I have said, the natural consequence of a departure from the laws of right actions, founded in infinite love and wisdom."

"But what are these laws, Anne? I have never heard of any, and I have read the Bible. I am sure I should be glad to know them."

"Have you never read the Ten Commandments?"

"Certainly I have. But I have never, habitually, broken them."

"Perhaps you have never thought much about them."

"No, I cannot say that I have."

"Do you remember what the Lord says, in the Word, about the Commandments?"

"No, I do not, at this moment."

"Don't you recollect where he says, that, upon the Commandment to love the Lord with all our hearts, and our neighbors as ourselves, hangs all the law, and the prophets?"

"O, yes; I remember that."

"But, I expect you have never thought much about it."

"No; I cannot say that I have."

"Well, then, Mrs. Anderson, here is the law, any departure from which will make us unhappy."

"But no one, Anne, lives up to this law."

"It is a broad saying, Mrs. Anderson, but a true one, that no one in this world is happy. And here is the secret of unhappiness."

Genevieve was silent, and Anne proceeded:

"In just the degree that we love ourselves more than we love the Lord, and that we love the world more than we love the neighbor, will we depart from the true law of love, and find misery instead of pleasantness. That we all do depart, in a greater or less degree, from this law of love, is evidenced in the unhappiness which we all feel. In some, the departure is very great, and the consequences are deeper and more painful. In others, there is a process of approximation going on, and a desire existing, to conform in all things to this law; these

have a more even mind, and a more contented disposition. It is true, they have their seasons of pain; but they understand its nature, and profit by their knowledge.

"I cannot say, Anne," replied Mrs. Anderson, "that I can understand all that you have spoken. It seems as if it might all be true. But I never could believe it possible to love our neighbor as ourselves. It is not natural."

"We must, in the first place," said Anne, "be willing to believe that our Heavenly Father knows better than we do what is right. When we establish this belief in our minds, then we will have some degree of willingness to obey, even though we cannot understand. So soon as we, from a right principle of obedience, attempt to shun what we are told is wrong, we shall soon begin to perceive why it is wrong. In this way we shall gradually be brought to know how it is possible to love the Lord and the neighbor better than ourselves or the world, and, from knowing, desire to have that pure love formed within us."

"But what has this to do, Anne, with my present affliction, and how can it remedy it?"

"As a general principle, Mrs. Anderson, it has much to do with it. But you cannot, in all probability, see it in your present state of mind. Still, if you have any desire to do what is pleasing to our Heavenly Father, and will begin, by doing, or trying to do, what you see to be right, you will soon perceive how much interest you will really have in the subject."

"But how shall I begin, Anne?"

"Are you ever conscious of acting or thinking wrong?"

"Yes, almost every day!"

"And this doing, or thinking wrong, always makes you feel more unhappy?"

"Always."

"Then the way is plain before you. As soon as you are conscious of wishing to do wrong, or of indulging in wrong desires and affections, then shun such thoughts and desires as evil, and, therefore, sins against the Lord; and particularly refrain, upon the same principle, from bringing out into action, and thereby confirming them, these evil thoughts or affections, and you will then be doing all that is required of you. Tranquillity of mind, such as you have never known, will succeed these efforts, if you persevere in them, looking all the while to the Lord for aid. Don't look at any thing but your present duty. Let every thing else take care of itself. In so doing you will find, that every day will bring its peculiar duties, and in their performance, you will find an internal satisfaction, of which no outward circumstances can rob you."

"I will try to do right, Anne; will you help me?"

"Even as I would help my own sister."

"You are kinder to me than my own sisters," said Genevieve, feelingly, looking with fearful eyes into the face of Anne. "And now I can

perceive, in some degree, what is meant by loving the neighbor, and how much happiness must flow from it. I am nothing to you, Anne, and yet you seem to love me, and care for me, more than those who are of my own blood. This cannot be a selfish love. It must be a love for my good." And, as the true idea dawned dimly upon her, and touched her heart, by its application to herself, as an object of that love, her feelings again gave way, and she laid her head upon the breast of her new found friend and wept aloud.

Under the kind and constant direction and admonition of Anne Earnest, Genevieve was enabled to bear, with a degree of meekness, and forbearance, the neglect of her parents, and the open unkindness of her sisters; and this change in her disposition, was not long in being observed by her parents, and softening their hearts towards her. Month after month passed away, but she had no tidings of her husband. As the period of their separation became more and more extended, obliterating the remembrance of unkindness, and warming up the love that had been felt for him, Genevieve became more and more desirous to hear from him, and once more to be with him. But, in this, it seemed as if she were not to be gratified, for there came no tidings for her anxious heart.

Gertrude and Genevra, in the pride of conscious superiority, looked upon Anne as far beneath them. Though she was tall and beautifully formed, with a face expressive of great loveliness of character, they could see nothing in her that was not vulgar. She was not suffered to sit at the table with the family, but was assigned the charge of that at which the boys eat. To this, she had no particular objection, as she soon perceived that her presence had a very great effect upon the apprentices, and that after the first few days their rudeness at the table gradually subsided. They soon showed a disposition to talk to her in a respectful manner, and, not unfrequently, referred to her the decision of little matters upon which they had disputed. It was a glad day for little Jimmy, when he saw her take her place at the table. Although she could not change the quality of their food, materially, yet she could, in a great measure, see that it came upon the table in proper order. She saw that the cook did not allow their coffee or tea to get cold; and, by rising very early in the morning, and seeing how things went on in the kitchen, and looking in there, too, at night, she managed to have a good many things, in the preparation of their food, attended to, that added to their comfort;—particularly in the prevention of large quantities of corn bread from being baked up by the lazy cook, which they would be forced to eat cold, day after day, she made their fare much pleasanter. The necessity of living upon the same coarse food that they did, was not one that rendered her at all unhappy, as she could,

in submitting to this privation, make it more agreeable for them.

Among the many young men who visited, occasionally, at the house of Mr. Hardamer, was the only son of a rich farmer, who had recently come to the city and opened a store on Market street. His name was Illerton. He had made but few acquaintances since his removal to the city, and, among these, happened to be Genevra and Gertrude. Usually about once every week he dropped in and spent an evening with them; but, as he was a young man of fine education and fine principles, he did not become much interested in either of the young ladies. Still, as time frequently hung heavy on his hands, and he was fond of cultivating the social feelings, he continued to drop in pretty regularly.

It so happened that he called in, one evening, when both of the girls were out. He was shown up stairs into the parlor by the black servant, who either did not know or care any thing about the girls not being in, and who went back direct to the kitchen, without taking the trouble to make any inquiries. Anne, who of course never went into the parlor when there was company there, and rarely at other times, was, on this evening, sitting there alone, at the centre-table, reading. She rose at the entrance of Illerton, who, surprised and delighted at seeing so sweet a face, though that of a stranger, begged her to be seated. With easy politeness she resumed her chair, remarking, at the same time, that she was sorry to tell him that the young ladies had gone out for the evening.

There was something in the face of Anne that charmed Illerton, the moment he saw her, and her low voice, that trembled slightly, sounded to him more musical than any voice he had ever heard. For some time he endeavored to draw her into conversation, but, although, every reply she made charmed him more and more, he could not succeed in getting her to converse freely. Her reserve he easily understood to be the naturally maiden reserve of a pure minded woman towards a perfect stranger. Illerton was a man who readily understood character, and rarely came to false conclusions in reference to any one. After sitting for nearly half an hour, much longer than his own sense of propriety told him he ought to have lingered in her company, under the circumstances, he rose to depart.

"You must pardon me," he said, "for having, so long, being altogether a stranger, intruded upon your company. My only excuse is, that I have been interested."

"It is no intrusion upon me, sir," replied Anne, "and if, in the absence of the young ladies, I have succeeded in making your call a pleasant one, I can only be gratified."

"You must pardon me another act of presumption," said Mr. Illerton, smiling; "I did not know that you resided, as you have inti-

mated, in this family. May I beg to know your name?"

"My name is Anne Earnest," she replied, modestly, while a slight blush deepened the color on her cheek.

"I must again beg pardon for this seeming rudeness," he said, and bowing low, he bade her good evening, and withdrew.

Illerton could only suffer a single evening to pass, before again calling. On entering the parlor, this time, his eye glanced rapidly around, but none were present, save Gertrude and Geneva, who received him with all the interesting airs and graces they could put on. But in vain did they talk, and sing, and thrum the piano for his especial edification. He could not feel the smallest interest in them.

"How sorry I was that we were not at home when you called last," said Geneva, during a flagging pause in the conversation. "We were so disappointed when we learned that you had been here."

"But you left me an agreeable companion to compensate for your absence," he replied in a livelier tone. "Why, you never told me that a Miss Earnest was staying with you. Where does she keep herself? I should really like to see her, and apologize for my rudeness in spending half an hour with her, although a perfect stranger."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed out Geneva—"that is a good one! Why she's only a girl that 'Ma hires to sew. How could you have been so deceived? I shall have to tell 'Ma to keep her out of the parlor, the forward minx! I am mortified, though, indeed, Mr. Illerton, that one of our hirelings should have pushed herself into your company. But it shall never happen again."

To this speech Illerton was at a perfect loss for a reply. He had often heard of accomplished virtue in obscurity. Here was an instance, he could not doubt, for he could not believe himself mistaken in his impressions. Every movement, every word, every varying expression of Anne's countenance, he remembered, as distinctly as if she were still sitting before him; and the remembrance only added to his admiration. He felt indignant at hearing her designated, sneeringly, as the hireling of girls who were in every thing her inferiors. But he did not, of course, give form to his thoughts; he merely said—

"Don't check her or speak unkindly to her on my account, for, I assure you, she acted with modesty and propriety. She was reading in the parlor when I entered, and rose, to go out, I suppose, when I insisted upon her being seated. It was my fault, not her's."

"But, it's annoying to have sewing girls pushing themselves in the way of gentlemen who visit here. We must, hereafter, insist upon her keeping in her own room," said Gertrude, rather warmly.

Illerton was constrained to oppose this un-

feeling resolution, but he forced himself to be silent, and, soon after, took his leave.

"Did you ever hear of such a thing!" exclaimed Geneva, as the front door closed after him.

"I'm mortified to death!" responded Gertrude.

"The pert, forward, huzzy!" ejaculated Geneva.

"If ever she tries such a trick as that, again, she walks out of this house in a jiffy!" added Gertrude.

"What an idea! An agreeable half hour, spent with our hired girl!" broke in Geneva.

"I expect he's mortified to death, and I'm afraid he'll not come any more. How could you laugh right out so, when he mentioned Anne?" said Gertrude.

"Because I couldn't help it; it was such a queer joke."

"Well, I can tell you, it was very rude," replied Gertrude, warmly, whose fears were a good deal excited at the bare idea of losing Illerton, as a beau, through the indiscretion of her sister in laughing at him.

"Fiddle-stick! Your ideas of propriety have grown very nice, all at once!" responded Geneva.

"I wish your's were a little nicer, that's all I've got to say," rejoined Gertrude.

"Well, I can tell you, Miss, that I know what is right and proper as well as you do," replied Geneva, tartly, "and have no notion of being called to account by you. So you may just shut up!"

"I'll call you to an account whenever I please, Miss Touchy!" said Gertrude, growing more excited. "You are a rude, forward girl, let me tell you!—and have driven more company from the house than your neck's worth, so you have! I'll complain to Ma, so I will!" she continued, more passionately.

"Will you, indeed? ah—that will be interesting," said Geneva, with a sneering laugh.

"Come! come! What's the matter here, now?" broke in Mrs. Hardamer, who had been attracted from the next room, by the loud voices of her daughters.

"Why, you see—" began Gertrude; but she was interrupted by Geneva, before she could utter another syllable, with—

"It's no such thing, Ma, it was—"

"It was!"—broke in Gertrude.

"It wasn't no such thing, now," said Geneva.

"Both of you hush up at once!" said the mother.

"But, Ma—"

"Listen to me, Ma."

"Don't I tell you to hush!"

"It was all Anne's fault, Ma," said Geneva, not at all inclined to obey the maternal injunction of silence.

"What about Anne?" asked Mrs. Hardamer.

"Why, you wouldn't'a thought it, Ma," continued Geneva, "but it's as true as death!

Night before last, when Mr. Ilerton called here, Anne was stuck up in the parlor, and the forward thing had the boldness to keep him there for half an hour or so, talking to her, just as if she was somebody. And here, this evening, he must ask for Miss Earnest! I was so much amused that I laughed right out, and told him that she was only our hired sewing girl. And Gertrude is mad because I laughed."

"Is it possible that Anne was guilty of such unpardonable presumption?"

"Yes, it is so! Because Genevieve chooses to make a companion of her, she thinks she is as good as we are. But I can tell her, that she's mightily mistaken!"

"The pert, forward buzzy!" ejaculated Mrs. Hardamer, with a strong expression of disgust at the idea of one of her hirelings sitting up to entertain her daughter's company.

"Ring the bell for Millie!" she added, and Genevra rung the parlor bell.

"Tell Anne to come here," she said, on the appearance of the black girl.

In a few minutes Anne attended the summons.

"You are a nice young lady, now, ain't you?" said Mrs. Hardamer, as she entered, the face of the latter red with passion.

Anne looked at her with an expression of surprise, and Mrs. Hardamer continued:

"A pretty young lady, truly!"

"I do not understand you, madam," said Anne, in painful surprise. "Be kind enough to say, in what I have offended you."

"Pretty bold, too!—upon my word! Do you know who you are talking to, Miss?"

"I am not conscious of having done any thing wrong, Mrs. Hardamer, and only asked you to tell me in what I had offended you," said Anne, in a respectful voice, though her lips quivered, and her face had grown exceedingly pale.

"Did any one ever see such assurance!" exclaimed Genevra.

"What can this mean!" said Anne, the tears starting to her eyes.

"Mighty ignorant!" said Gertrude.

"I must insist on an explanation," said Anne, more firmly, brushing away two drops that had stolen over their boundaries, and were gently gliding down her pale cheeks.

"Insist on an explanation!" exclaimed Mrs. Hardamer, in supreme astonishment at Anne's insolence. "Insist on an explanation from me! Do you know who you are talking to, Miss?"

"I'd turn her out of the house, bag and baggage, so I would!" said Gertrude.

"Indeed, madam, I cannot suffer myself to be talked to in this way," said Anne, calmly, "at the same time that I am innocent of having done any thing wrong," and she turned to leave the room.

"How dare you!" exclaimed Mrs. Hardamer, in a loud voice, stamping on the floor with her foot. "Come back here this minute!"

Anne paused, and half turned herself towards her censors, when Gertrude said in a sneering tone—

"She's got quite above herself since Mr. Ilerton spoke to her."

Anne turned, and advanced a few steps towards them, her face suffused with a deep crimson.

"You understand, now, I suppose Miss Impertinence!" said Mrs. Hardamer. "How dare you stick yourself up in the parlor to talk to young men that come here! What good do you suppose they want with you?"

"Is that all I have done to offend you, Mrs. Hardamer?" said Anne, breathing more freely.

"And I should think that was enough, in all conscience!"

"But, Mrs. Hardamer, I didn't throw myself into his company. He came into the parlor where I was reading, and I at once told him the young ladies were out. If he would sit down and talk to me, how could I help it? I could not have acted so rudely as to have left him alone."

"Now that is too much!" broke in Gertrude.

"And so you evened yourself with us, and set yourself up to entertain *our* company! Give me patience! I wouldn't allow her to stay in the house another day, if I was you, Ma! Who's a going to come here, if our hired girls stick themselves up to keep their company. Mr. Ilerton was mortified to death, when he discovered his mistake, and I shouldn't blame him, if he never came to the house again."

"If ever you dare to play off such another trick, my young lady, it'll be your last day here, remember that, now!" said Mrs. Hardamer.

Anne made no answer, but turned and left the room.

"High-pop-a-lorum!" ejaculated Millie to herself, as she retreated, silently, from the outside of the door, in the passage, where she had stood, listening to the whole conversation.

"Things have come to a pretty pass, truly!"

said Genevra, when Anne had left the room, "that every hired girl must set herself up for somebody. There'll be no living here after awhile. I wish we were in England, where servants know their places."

"The fact is, Ma," said Gertrude, who felt strongly incensed at Anne, for having passed an evening with Ilerton, on whom she had designs best known to herself, "if I were you, I wouldn't keep her in the house. She'll bring discredit upon us. I don't believe she's any better than she should be, and her conduct in this thing has proved it. I'd pack her off to-morrow, so I would!"

CHAPTER V.

ANOTHER MOVEMENT.

"THE devil!" ejaculated Ike Wilson, with an indignant expression, as he sat rubbing the sole of a boot, one morning before breakfast.

"What's the matter, Ike?" asked Tom.

"Why, I'm mad, and can't get over it!"

"What are you mad about?"

"Something that Millie told me this morning."

"And what was that, Ike?" asked both the boys at once, pausing in their work.

"Why I've found out the reason the best friend we ever had in this house, has left it."

"Indeed! Who? Anne?"

"Of course."

"What was it, Ike?" was asked by both Tom and Bill, with an earnestness that indicated the strong interest they felt in the matter.

"You wouldn't guess in a month of Sundays. But I'll tell you. Millie says, a young gentleman, Mr. Illerton, who keeps the dry goods' store, up street, came in one night, when Gertrude and Geneva were out, and found Anne in the parlor. He was so pleased with her, that he sat and talked for half an hour. Somehow or other, they found it out, and kicked up a row about it. They called her to her face, a mean, low hired girl, and wanted to know how she dared to stick herself up for a lady, and entertain their company."

"The devil!" ejaculated the two eager listeners, at the same moment.

"It's true as preaching! Millie says she listened at the parlor door, and heard it all."

"Well, if that don't beat the old Harry," said Bill. "Now just look at it. Here's Anne Earnest, who's got as much beauty in her little finger, and as much sense in her toe-nail, as Gertrude and Geneva have in their whole bodies, insulted and forced out of the house, because she happened to talk for half an hour with a man who had sense enough to be pleased with her, and who was foolish enough to keep their company."

"They're proud, stuck up fools! that's what they are!" said Tom, with indignant warmth. "I'll never forgive them for this, now see if I do! While Anne was here, we did live a little kind of comfortable, and that's what we never did before. It makes my blood boil all through me!"

"I don't care so much for myself," broke in Ike. "But, to have such a sweet, good girl, abused and insulted, in that kind of a style, is too much for me to bear. Here's my hand to your's, Tom, never to forgive 'em for it."

"And here's mine, too," said Bill, joining his hand to those of the two worthies, in solemn compact. "I've got the devil in me, I believe, and I don't care if I have. I could bite a ten-penny nail in two." And he ground his teeth in impotent rage.

"I relished the corn bread and herrings—the salt beef and potatoes well enough, after I saw her eat them so cheerfully," continued Ike, "but it made me mad to see her, the only lady in the house, forced to live on that kind of stuff, while them painted powder-monkeys up stairs, could hardly get things delicate enough for

their dainty stomachs. How I wanted to blow out! But, then, every time I'd say any thing about it, or sneer at them, before Anne, she would smile so sweetly while she checked me, that it made me love her. It was only for her sake that I kept in, for I wouldn't have done any thing that she didn't want me to do for the world. But she's gone now, and it'll be strange if the devil ain't raised in this house before long."

"Yes, and she's gone to a better place, that's one consolation," added Tom. "Mrs. Webster is a lady, and will know how to treat one like Anne."

"That's true, Tom," said Ike, "and I'm glad in my heart that she's better off. But that don't make the old queen of Sheba, up stairs, any better, confound her picture!"

"I've got an old grudge against her, and all the rest," said Bill, "and I'll have it out with 'em if I die for it. I'm for striking while the iron's hot. A good deed is always done quickly."

"That's a fact," responded Ike, warmly.

"How shall we begin?" asked Tom.

"There'll be ways enough, and we'll not have to look long to find 'em," said Ike.

"Them herring begin to smell rather loud, I'm thinking," said Bill, turning up his nose with an expression of disgust.

"Yes; and if that butter we've had for the last week wasn't made before Noah's flood, my nose is no judge," added Tom.

"Come to breakfast," said Millie, poking her black face into the shop door, and showing a couple of rows of snow-white teeth, grinning from ear to ear.

Dropping a kit of tools on benches and floor in admirable disorder, our three worthies were drawing their chairs up to the kitchen table in one minute from the time Millie gave them notice that all was ready. Mrs. Hardamer was at the head of the table, a place she had occupied for the last two days, Anne having been gone for that time. Three herrings, a small piece of butter, and a plate of corn bread, made up the stereotyped meal. Ike passed the plate of bread around with an air that did not escape the ever active eye of Mrs. Hardamer, and which put her more on her guard in observing what was to follow.

"Have a turkey?" he said, cutting a herring in two, and offering a part to Bill.

"I'll take the tail if you please," said Bill; and Ike shovelled the tail-end off upon his plate.

"Heads or tails, Tom?" continued Ike, cutting another herring in two.

"Tails," responded Tom.

"Tails it is," said Ike, scraping another half off of the dish.

Mrs. Hardamer's blood went up to fever heat, at this piece of bold disregard for her presence.

"Come, mind what you are about my young gentlemen!" she said, tartly, her face assuming the color of scarlet. Digitized by Google

Ike turned out his cup of pale, lukewarm, rye-

coffee, and lifting his saucer daintily to his lips, sipped a little, and then leisurely poured the fluid back into his cup, and replaced it in the saucer.

"What's the matter with your coffee, Ike?" said Mrs. Hardamer, unable to contain herself.

"I didn't say any thing the matter with it, ma'am," replied Ike, with a respectful air.

"Why don't you drink it, then?" she asked, in a loud, angry voice.

"Because it's so cold it turns my stomach!" said Ike, decidedly.

Just as Ike made this answer, Bill leisurely replaced his tail-end of the fish upon the plate from which he had received it, at the same time giving his nose a very perceptible curl upwards.

"And, pray, what's the matter with your fish, Bill?" said the old lady, turning towards that worthy, with a fiery countenance.

"It ain't good, ma'am," said Bill.

"Ain't good, ha? And pray sir, what ails it?"

"I should think it had hung in the yard rather long, ma'am."

"Do you know who you are talking to, sir? What do you mean?"

Just at this moment her eye detected a movement of Tom's, not to be mistaken. That gentleman was coolly, and leisurely scraping off of the smooth surface of his corn bread, the thin stratum of rancid, oleaginous matter, which had been dignified by the name of butter, and depositing it on the edge of his plate, while an expression of ill-concealed disgust sat upon his countenance. This was like fire to gunpowder, and Mrs. Hardamer exploded with a loud noise. Having no desire to bandy words with their mistress, as that was, by no means, their game, the three chaps beat a quick retreat. But they were not to escape her so easily, for, following them into the shop, she poured upon them a volley of abuse, which quickly attracted the attention of Hardamer, and brought him at once to the spot.

"What's the matter here, ha?" he exclaimed, with an expression of both anger and alarm upon his countenance.

"Why, they've insulted me at the table," began Mrs. Hardamer, in a loud, shrieking voice, "and I won't bear it, the low-lived, dirty vagabonds! Talk to me of spoilt fish, ha! Mighty dainty your stomachs have become all at once!"

"What does all this mean, I'd like to know?" now broke in Hardamer, looking fiercely towards the boys, who had hastily seated themselves, and were in the posture of bending over their work.

"Why, you see, Ike there, the impertinent scoundrel! undertook to play off his pranks at the table, and Bill and Tom must both join him in it. One couldn't drink the coffee, another said the fish was spoiled, and Tom, there, turned up his nose at the butter."

"You villain! what do you mean?" said Hardamer, losing all command of his feelings.

"We didn't mean to insult Mrs. Hardamer," replied Ike, in a respectful tone.

"You did!—you did!—you lying vagabond!" said Mrs. Hardamer, breaking in upon him. "How dare you put on that sanctified face about it!"

"Indeed, then, ma'am, we did not."

"Hush up your tongue, you puppy you!" responded the old lady, wrought up to a high pitch of indignation.

"Come, come!—enough of this!" said Hardamer, impatiently, "I want to know the truth of this matter."

"The truth of the matter, indeed! The truth of the matter! What do you mean by the truth of the matter, sir? I want to know if I haven't told you the truth of the matter? A pretty pass, indeed, when you talk to me about the truth of the matter!"

"If you want me to settle this affair, madam," said Hardamer, to his wife, in a low tone, not so low, however, but that the boys heard it distinctly—"you must go into the house, and let me alone. I've heard your story, and now I'll hear their's."

Mrs. Hardamer turned upon him with increased fury, and he at once left her in full possession of the field. After berating the boys for five minutes longer, all of which they stood with silent heroism, she retired, still full of wrath, to her own part of the house.

"She's keen, now, ain't she," said Bill, as soon as she was fairly beyond ear shot.

"Keen as a razor!" responded Ike.

"A whole team!" added Tom.

"I wonder what old Lignumvitæ will do, any how?" he continued. "The queen has got her back up as round as a cat's, and, I'm thinking, we can easily creep under it, and escape with whole skins."

"Never fear; the old chap's had a taste of our quality, and, it's my opinion, that he don't care to have another," said Ike.

"He will have another taste, though; and not only a taste, but a good bottle full; and if he don't get drunk on it, it'll not be our fault, I'm thinking," said Bill.

"What's all this fuss about, ha?" said the individual just alluded to, in an angry voice, suddenly breaking in upon the young plotters of insubordination.

"Do you hear? you young scoundrels!" he continued, after a moment's pause, seeing that none showed a disposition to respond to his interrogation.

"Ike, what's been the matter?" he now said, addressing the ringleader in the mischief.

"I didn't do any thing, sir, but turn my coffee back into my cup, and refuse to drink it. Millie always sends on the table such lukewarm, watery stuff, that I can't get it down any longer. I tried this morning, but indeed, sir, I couldn't drink it," said Ike in a respectful manner.

"And what caper is this you've been catting up, ha?" he said, turning angrily towards Bill.

"I didn't do nothing; only I couldn't eat the herrings, for they were tainted. Millie lets 'em hang up in the sun until they're clear spoilt, sometimes. She don't care how we get our victuals."

Even to this Hardamer felt no disposition to reply, and he addressed Tom.

"You turned up your nose at the butter, did you? I know that to have been downright impudence, for I always buy the best of fresh butter in market twice a week."

"We don't get that butter, though," said Ike, speaking up, "Millie always takes it out of the keg of cooking butter, and, you know, that is strong enough to knock down an ox."

"Confound that nigger!" said Hardamer, at once retreating and making his way to the kitchen.

"Didn't we ease it off on poor Millie, though?" said Ike, exultingly. "That was done to a charm! It's a good rule, and we ought to adopt it, never to throw blame on a man's wife."

"It'll be better times, now, I'm thinking," said Tom, Old Ligeumvite's a little mad with the queen, and he'll reform matters, if it's only in spite. After a while we'll give him a little more to do. It will never do to eat corn bread and drink rye coffee much longer. We're just as good as they are, and work to support 'em, and it's not fair to put us off on slops."

"We'll reform that matter when we once begin. Slow and sure must be our motto," said Tom.

Upon investigation, Hardamer found that there was real cause of complaint, and, this being the case, he thought it best to pass over the rude conduct of his boys towards Mrs. Hardamer. She was indignant at the censure which she received, and declared that it was "good enough for 'em, and as good as they'd get."

"It's no use for you to talk, Sally," responded Hardamer, to her indignant threat of keeping them on the old fare. "The boys work hard, and must be attended to. Besides, they're beginning to feel their age, and if things shouldn't go on pretty smoothly, they'd as lief clear out as not; and their loss, let me tell you, would be no light matter."

"Put a beggar on horseback, and he'll ride to—you know where!" said Mrs. Hardamer. "If you go to giving in to their insolent demands, the house 'll soon be too small to hold us all, I can tell you. Give 'em an inch, and they'll take an ell. You must make 'em toe the mark all the while, or they'll go zigzag, like a worm-fence. I'm astonished at you, Mr. Hardamer!"

Hardamer felt, in some degree, the force of what she said. But he stood in this unpleasant predicament. He had treated his boys like slaves, while they were small, and now, from having no respect for him, they had ceased to fear him. In their first act of insubordination, they had conquered him, and he felt that his power over them was at an end. From the very necessity of his position, he was compelled to regard their comfort. Yet, at the same time,

he felt, that the young rebels would not be contented with the power they had already gained. Not disposed, however, to take much share of the blame to himself, he replied to his wife's last remark:

"It's just as bad to hold the rein too tight, as to let it go loose. While I have been trying to keep things in a right trim, you have been galling the boys in the tenderest places, by not giving them palatable food. I don't blame 'em for not eating them herrings, and I wouldn't have given that butter to a dog!"

"It was all good enough for the discontented vagabonds! Do they think we can afford to feed them on pound cake!" said Mrs. Hardamer, warmly.

"I tell you it was *not* good enough, madam!" replied the husband, much excited.

"Well, I tell you how it *was*, sir!" responded his high tempered wife.

"Go to—" But he kept in the angry word, and retreated in disorder to the front shop, where he resumed his work at the boot he had been dressing up, and choked in his indignation as best he could. Mrs. Hardamer, it will be perceived, had as much need as the boys to understand rightly the meaning of the word subordination.

In a few evenings, Mr. Illerton again called upon the Misses Hardamer, as they liked to be called, in hopes of again catching a sight of Anne, in whom his interest began steadily to increase. On that day she had left her uncomfortable retreat for something like a home, with a lady, in the true sense of the word—a Mrs. Webster. No allusion could, of course, be made to her by Mr. Illerton; and, after sitting an hour, he retired, without, of course, catching a glance of the one he so much desired to see.

"Do you see that, now?" said Gertrude, after he had gone, "that forward huzzy has ruined us with Mr. Illerton. All I could do, I couldn't interest him, and he has gone off in a little or no time since he came in."

"I could see her gibbeted!" exclaimed Genevra, in return, who had also began to look with favorable eyes upon the young merchant, whose real wealth rumor was beginning to exaggerate. "But she'll come to no good—that's one consolation."

"I do assure you, you wrong Anne, as I have said before," remarked Genevieve, earnestly.

"No one asked for your opinion!" responded Genevra, snappishly.

"It is not kind in you to talk so to me, Genevra," said Genevieve, mildly. "I only speak of Anne as I believe, and I have had some little chance to know her."

"And I suppose you'd justify her insolence in sticking herself up to entertain our company," said Gertrude, sneeringly.

"I must confess, Gertrude, that I do not, and cannot view her conduct in the light that you do, and therefore must say so," replied Genevieve.

"New, ain't that too bad!"

"But, in sober reason, Gertrude, I cannot understand in what Anne was to blame, or in what consists her great inferiority."

"I've no patience to talk to you!" said Gertrude, passionately. "If you choose to put yourself on a level with such as her, you can do it; but you can depend upon it, I am not going to keep company with any such characters."

"There is no use, Gertrude, in getting excited about this," said Genevieve, mildly. "Certainly, as sisters, we ought to talk upon any subject without growing angry, or calling hard names. I, for one, have no wish to do so, and will not do so, no matter what you may say to me."

"That's all very well," remarked Gertrude, in a less excited tone, "but it requires patience to hear you take the part of that dirty trollop."

"Indeed, indeed, Gertrude, you are wrong in using such language about a girl who has not been guilty of any impropriety of which she is sensible," said Genevieve.

"Don't talk to her, Gertrude," said Genevieve, indignantly. "She's no better, in my opinion, than Anne."

"I should be glad, Genevieve, if I were half as good as Anne," remarked Genevieve, in a calm voice.

"Didn't I tell you so!" responded that young lady.

"In sober earnestness, I should like to know in what you consider Anne so far beneath respect," said Genevieve. "I am afraid you have, what I had, once, too many false notions of true elevation of character. In the external circumstances that surround us, there can be nothing truly honorable, apart from internal excellence. If, within, there be not purity of affection and uprightness of thought, there can be no real superiority. Elevation in society, is, in most cases, the accident of birth. If our father had been very poor, could we have helped it? His being better off than others, can, therefore, impart no merit to us."

"You're a fool!" said Gertrude.

"Ain't you ashamed, Gertrude?" said Genevieve.

"No, I am not ashamed! Genevieve talks like a fool, and always was one. Would any body but a fool have married that worthless vagabond, Anderson, and thus brought disgrace upon the family? It's all very pretty for her to talk about her change of views,—but I'm not to be taken in by such gull-nets. She's like the fox that lost his tail; very anxious to bring us down to her level. But she's mistaken if she expects to fool me."

A tear stole out, and rolled over the cheek of Genevieve. The cruel remark of her sister, in reference to her husband she felt keenly and deeply. Something of returning tenderness, more genuine than any thing she had yet felt, had warmed up her heart, since better thoughts and better feelings had found a place in her

mind, and she had begun to entertain the hope of one day seeing him a changed man, and of being to him a true wife, and finding him a true husband. She did not again attempt to allude to the subject, that had induced the unkind remark; for she felt that it would be useless to do so. In a few minutes she left the parlor, and retired to her own room.

"I am ashamed of you, Gertrude! How could you talk so?" said Genevieve, as soon as her sister had withdrawn.

"Let her mind her own business, then," replied Gertrude. "She's disgraced herself, and now wants to bring us all down to her level. I've no patience with her!"

"We may not find Genevieve so wrong in the end, in what she says, it kind of strikes me. Though I cannot approve of her taking sides with that forward minx, there is no doubt but that she is greatly changed, and is not half so irritable as she used to be. In this we might take from her a useful lesson. The time was, Gertrude, when she would not have taken from you so calmly what she did to-night."

"She's only mortified at the figure she cuts as a grass-widow; that's all the change I see about her. And I'm mortified to death about it, too."

"Well, if you are, Gertrude, I don't see that it has as good an effect upon you, as it has upon her."

"I don't want any of your preaching, Miss, so just shut up your fly-trap!" and, with this lady-like speech, the elegant, and accomplished Miss Gertrude Hardamer swept out of the room in proud disdain.

CHAPTER VI.

MORE ABOUT ANNE EARNEST.

"AND can it be possible, Anne, that you were treated so unkindly?" said Mrs. Webster, while she sat sewing with Anne Earnest, about one week after she had taken her into her family as sempstress.

This remark was occasioned by a short sketch of the scene that occurred in Mrs. Hardamer's parlor, on the night Anne was taken so seriously to task by the mother and daughters; a sketch, given, at the request of Mrs. Webster, who had, from a word inadvertently dropped by Anne, suspected that she had not been rightly treated.

"It happened just as I have stated it, madam," said Anne.

"I have no doubt of it," replied Mrs. Webster. "My question was only indicative of surprise. But who was the young man, Anne?"

"His name, I believe, was Illerton."

"Illerton!" said Mrs. Webster, in a tone of surprise. "Does he keep a dry goods store on Market street?"

"Indeed, ma'am, I do not know any thing about him. He seemed like a gentleman; and, my impression of him, derived from hearing him converse for half an hour, has made me wonder, more than once, how he could be interested in either Gertrude or Geneva."

Mrs. Webster was silent for some minutes, and then changed the subject. She was the widow of a rich merchant, who, in dying, had left a very large property entirely under her control. She had three children, all boys, the oldest only about twelve years of age. She was, in every respect, a lady—finely educated, and externally accomplished. But her external accomplishments were not the mere holiday garments of "made ladies"—they were the true expression of internal graces. In Anne, she soon perceived the excellencies of a true and tried spirit; and her heart moved towards her with a pure, maternal tenderness. The more she saw of her, the more she perceived to admire and to love."

One evening, about a week after this conversation, while Anne was engaged in reading to Mrs. Webster and the children, a gentleman was announced by the servant as being in the parlor; and Mrs. Webster withdrew, leaving Anne with the children.

"Why, how do you do, Henry! I'm glad to see you," said Mrs. Webster, extending her hand to a fine looking young man, who met her in the parlor. "You're really a stranger. I have not seen you for a month. You must not neglect your mother's old friend, Henry, or she will get jealous."

"Indeed, Mrs. Webster, I do owe an apology for my neglect. But, I've been a little interested of late, and, you know, when a young man is interested in a certain way, he is apt to neglect his old friends."

"You're quite ready with a confession, Henry, but I think I'm a little ahead of you. You think Miss Hardamer quite an interesting young lady. Am I not right?"

"Not exactly," replied the young man, somewhat confused. "But how in the world did you know that I went there?"

"You see that I know, Henry, and you will have to be content with that, at present. But, seriously, Henry, if all I hear about the daughters of Mr. Hardamer be true, I cannot greatly admire your taste."

"Seriously, then, Mrs. Webster, I neither admire nor respect them."

"Then why do you go there?"

"I've got a little adventure to tell you, and when you hear that, you will understand why I have continued to go there. As far as the young ladies are concerned, I have not the least inclination to visit the house. But I called there one evening, shortly after I had been introduced to the girls, and they happened to be out. In their place I found one of the sweetest young creatures I have ever met—so beautiful, so graceful, so modest! I was so charmed

with her, that, notwithstanding her evident uneasiness at being compelled to entertain a perfect stranger, I sat for half an hour in her company. On retiring, I was bold enough to ask her name, which she gave without hesitation."

"And what was it?" asked Mrs. Webster.

"Anne Earnest," replied the young man. "On the next evening I called again, in hopes of learning more about the interesting stranger. On asking for her, I was told, with a sneer, that she was only their hired sewing-girl; and they were in high disdain at the idea of her presuming to entertain their company. I have called several times since, in hopes of getting another glimpse of her, but in vain. Last night I ventured to mention her name, and to ask for her. 'We've turned her out of the house, the presuming huzzy!' said one of the young ladies, with indignant warmth; 'for we had reason to suspect her of too much intimacy with improper persons.'"

"Is it possible!" exclaimed Mrs. Webster, in unfeigned astonishment, completely thrown off of her guard.

"It is true," responded the young man, looking a little surprised, at the feeling exhibited by Mrs. Webster. "And I am sure that she has been thus treated on my account, and it distresses me exceedingly. How gladly would I search her out, if I could only get the clue. What would you advise me to do, Mrs. Webster; for, really, I am not able to decide for myself!"

"Why, my advice would be, Henry, for you to act with your usual caution and prudence in this matter. You don't know any thing about this Miss Earnest, and might involve yourself in an improper acquaintance."

"But I could swear to her innocence, Mrs. Webster."

"You are really more romantic than I had thought you, Henry. Having withstood so many assaults from the little god, it is rather amusing to find you taken, at last, in the meshes of an obscure and unknown sewing girl."

"You may laugh, if you choose, Mrs. Webster, but I know your impressions would have been as favorable as mine, if you had seen her. I wonder who she can be, and where she has found an asylum?"

"But, seriously, Henry, don't you see that you are running off a little wildly. What would your mother and sisters say to your bringing home a mere sewing girl, of unknown or of obscure family, and presenting her as your wife?"

"My mother and sisters are sensible women, and know how to appreciate virtue, be it found in the palace or cottage; among high-born ladies, or humble maidens."

"Then you are really serious, Henry?"

"Of course I am."

"Thinking about marrying a girl you know nothing about, and have never seen but once!"

"Strange as it may seem, Mrs. Webster, that is the very direction my thoughts are taking. But I am sure that she is pure and good, as I am that she is prudent and intelligent. I cannot be deceived. I have seen too many young women in my time, and have known too many not to be able to judge of any one after an half hour's acquaintance."

"Why, Henry!" said Mrs. Webster, "I never knew, before, that you were so vain of your discriminating powers. Most men are satisfied if they can find out a woman's real character, after having lived with her some twenty years, or more. But you can see quite through them in half an hour! You are, really, more of a novice in these affairs than I had thought you."

"No doubt I seem to you a little demented; but, indeed, I wish you could see this Miss Earnest. I'd be willing to leave the matter to your judgment, binding myself to abide the decision."

"Under these circumstances, I might be willing to countenance your romantic love affair."

"But I cannot find out where she is. At Hardamer's I can, of course, learn nothing more about her," said the young man.

"Would you know her if you were to meet her anywhere?" said Mrs. Webster.

"Of course I would. Her sweet face is always before me, and her voice has been like music in my ears ever since."

"Really, Henry! I am concerned for you. I'm afraid Cupid has struck you in the eye, and partially blinded you."

"Perhaps he has, Mrs. Webster. But, if that be the case, it is not my fault, if I see with a perverted vision."

"Well, Henry, I do not know how to advise you at present. But something may strike me, after I think about it; so I shall expect you to come and see me pretty often."

"I shall surely do that, Mrs. Webster; for there is no one else that I can talk to on the subject so near my heart."

"I was going to say, that I was sorry you had become so infatuated with this mysterious stranger; but, in this, perhaps, I would be wrong. I have, however, a young lady, here, who is going to reside with me, I expect, for some time, and I did flatter myself that you would find her particularly interesting."

"Who is she, Mrs. Webster?" he asked, with an apparent interest.

"It's of no particular consequence; any thing about another than the interesting stranger, would have no particular interest for you," replied Mrs. Webster.

"Well, I can't say that it would," he said, indifferently.

"That is too bad, Henry! But I'll punish you for it, see if I don't."

"I'll trust to your tender mercies, madam," said the young man, smiling.

After her visitor had retired, Mrs. Webster

returned to the sitting-room, and joined her family. The reader has, of course, recognised in this visitor, Mr. Illerton. Mrs. Webster now found herself placed in a new and responsible position. Although her impressions in reference to Anne, were of the most favorable character possible, yet, she was too prudent a woman to be governed altogether by first impressions. Anne's statement of her interview with Illerton, had not caused her a serious thought, but her conversation with the latter had awakened up, in her mind, a lively concern; more especially, as the fact of Anne's being in her family, rendered her responsibility very great. For the present, she resolved to do nothing, but to keep Illerton, if possible, ignorant of the fact that Anne was in the house, and trust to the developments of time.

Every day, Anne became more and more endeared to her, until she began to look upon her with the fond and partial eyes of a mother. Above all, did she love her for the deep and confiding principle of religion by which her whole life was governed. It was not a religion of obtrusiveness, nor of imposing forms of external sanctity. But it was a calm, peaceful, unwavering confidence in the wisdom and goodness of Divine Providence, and a constant obedience to all the commandments, internally, as well as externally.

"Do you never doubt the Providence of the Lord, Anne, when passing through the clouds and the shadows?" she said to her, during one of the interesting conversations she was in the habit of holding with her.

"I have rarely doubted of late, Mrs. Webster," she replied, "though weak human nature has often shrunk and trembled, even as the patient will shrink and tremble when the physician probes a dangerous ulcer."

"I cannot say, with you, that I do not sometimes doubt," said Mrs. Webster.

"When we remember," resumed Anne, "that the Lord has taught us, in addressing him, to say, 'Our Father,' we will perceive that there is really no cause for despondency, be the circumstances ever so much shadowed by uncertainty. In many places in the Bible, we are alluded to under the tender name of children. 'Even as a father pitieth his children,' is the Lord represented as regarding us."

"It is a little strange, Anne, that while conscious of the truth given to us that the Lord is our Father, we cannot feel the child-like confidence that we ought to feel," said Mrs. Webster.

"This arises, altogether, Mrs. Webster, from our unwillingness to sacrifice every thing for spiritual good. Until this shall be the case, we cannot feel confidence under what are called adverse Providences. We will not let a consciousness that Infinite Goodness and Wisdom will do all things for the best, come down into the will, and thus enter fully into the affections of the mind. Until we so fully approve of all that our Heavenly Father does, as to love

it, we cannot but suffer painful doubts when the day of trial arrives."

"I readily perceive that it is much easier to understand a truth than to be willing to do it," said Mrs. Webster.

"And just in so far," replied Anne, "as there is a harmony between the will and the understanding, are we in right states of obedience. To do the truth, willingly, is to love it; and when we love to do any thing, its performance is delightful to us."

"But it is very hard, Anne, to do what is opposed to our selfish feelings."

"No one knows that better than I do, madam. But, without effort, we can gain no victories. The evil of self love is too deeply implanted in our minds, to be easily removed. It requires a whole life-time of temptations and combats, entered into with unflinching resolution."

"A view of the case that might well discourage a stout heart," said Mrs. Webster.

"Yes, if there were no delights to cheer and invigorate at every step. But no one is given to see any more of the evils that are in the mind, than just enough to encourage to activity against them. The lower profound of evils is mercifully hidden, until, from victory to victory, strength and confidence is gained to enter into combat with every thing that opposes the descent into the heart of divine love from the Lord. And, after every victory, comes a season of delights and repose;—when we can lie down, as it were, by cool fountains, amid shady retreats, with birds and flowers filling the air with music and fragrance. There is no delight, Mrs. Webster, that can equal the delight arising from a willing performance of duty."

"That is true, Anne, and if all of us went simply about discharging every present duty, leaving the past and the future alone, how much happier would we be."

"In that simple fact of performing our present duties," replied Anne, "must come all of our real happiness that ever can come. It is the great secret of happiness. But the prevailing misery in the world shows how far the true principle of living for happiness is departed from." * * *

"There is a little boy in the passage, who wants to see Miss Earnest," said a servant, entering the room, and interrupting the conversation.

"Bring him in here, then, Nancy," said Anne, who conjectured that it was her little friend from Mrs. Hardamer's.

"Why, Jimmy!—how do you do! I'm glad to see you!" she said, in the next minute, as a pale, meagre looking boy, poorly clad, came forward with a timid and hesitating step, looking earnestly, at the same time, into the face of Mrs. Webster, with an expression that asked, as plain as words—"Am I wrong in coming here?"

"This is the little boy, Mrs. Webster, of whom I have told you," said Anne.

"Why haven't you been to see Anne before, my little fellow!" said Mrs. Webster, kindly. "I thought she told me that you liked her very much; or, at least, that you were in the habit of saying so."

"And, indeed, I do," said the child, his eyes filling with tears, "but I didn't like to come."

"You found courage at last, it seems," she replied with an encouraging smile.

"Yes, ma'am. I wanted to see her so bad, that I at last ventured to come here."

"Anne must have been good to you, you seem to like her so well."

"Indeed, indeed, she was then! And, now, she's the only friend I've got," the tears again starting to his eyes.

"Well, it would be a pity to intrude upon two such firm friends; and so I will retire," said Mrs. Webster, smiling.

"And how have matters and things gone on since I left you, Jimmy," asked Anne, after Mrs. Webster had left the room.

"Not like they did when you was there, Miss Anne. Nobody cares for us as you did. But then, we are all so glad you've got a better place, and wouldn't have you back again, to be abused and insulted as you were, for the world. But Geneva and Gertrude have got nothing by it, for Mr. Illerton don't come there at all any more, and we know it's because he didn't find you there."

"Why, Jimmy! What are you talking about?" exclaimed Anne, taken by surprise, for she had never mentioned to any one in the house, the unpleasant interview between her and Mrs. Hardamer.

"But who told you that I was abused and insulted?" she added.

"Why, Millie heard it all, and told us about it. It would have done your heart good to have heard how the boys went on. Ike, and the rest of 'em, say they'll make the house too hot to hold 'em all, now you, the only friend they ever had there, have been forced to go away."

"Indeed, Jimmy, I hope the boys won't do any thing wrong on my account," she said, with much concern.

"They've got a standing grudge against the whole family, and are going to have it out, now you ain't there to hold 'em back as you used to do," replied the little boy.

"But you are not going to have any thing to do with it, Jimmy?"

"O, no, indeed, Miss Anne, that I ain't! I'm too little. And, any how, I shouldn't think it right to do it myself, though I'm glad when they cool 'em off a little, as they have, since you've been away."

"Did you say that Mr. Illerton had stopped going to see the young ladies?" asked Anne.

"Yes, indeed, he has. He asked for you one night, so Millie says, and they were quite hot about it; and so he just up and told 'em that you were worth a dozen such as them."

"That cannot be, I am sure. Mr. Illerton,

certainly, did not talk in so ungentlemanly a manner!"

"I don't think it was any thing more than the truth, and I'm sure I hope he did say it," replied Jimmy, warmly.

"You are wrong," said Anne to her little friend. "You must not desire to have any injured, or wounded in their feelings, because they do not treat you well. You know that such desires spring from revenge, and revenge is murder in disguise."

"So you used to tell me; but I didn't think about that," said the boy.

"I hope things go on pretty smoothly with you now, Jimmy!"

"I can't say that they do, Miss Anne," replied the child, in a desponding tone. "Yesterday Mr. Hardamer beat me, until I am sore all over. I'd been to market with him, and had the great big market basket, which he piled up almost full. There was half a peck of potatoes, a quarter of veal, and half a peck of apples; besides a good many other things. On top were put a dozen eggs, and then the butter kettle, full of butter, was fitted in one end among the apples. I could hardly get round the market, it was so heavy, and when Mr. Hardamer put it on my head and told me to go home, I thought I should have sunk right down. I'd 'a' said something, but I was afraid. I started up Market street, and went on as fast as I could. When I got to the first water plug, I felt just as if I was going to fall, and I could hardly see. I asked two or three men to help me down with the basket, but they looked at me and passed on. Just as I thought I should have to give up, a black man lifted the basket off my head, and set it on the plug for me. I stood there about five minutes, and then got a boy to help me up with it again. It seemed heavier than ever, but I started off with it and kept right up the street. While trying to step down from the curb-stone at Gay street, I lost my balance, and fell, in spite of all I could do. Every thing in the basket rolled out—butter, eggs and all. The eggs were all broken, and the butter tumbled into the dirt. I put them all back into the basket, except the eggs, and asked a boy, who was the only one that seemed to pity me—every body else laughed—to help me along with the basket. He took hold of one side, and helped me clear home. We set the basket down in the shop, and Mr. Hardamer saw, at once, that something was wrong.

"What's the matter, there?" he said in an angry voice, coming from behind the counter.

"I fell down—it was so heavy," I said, trembling all over.

"Where's the eggs?" he said, more angrily.

"They're all broken, sir," said I.

"And here's the butter all covered with dirt!" he said, pulling off the lid of the butter-kettle. "You did it on purpose, you infernal little scoundrel you!"

"And then he dragged me into the back shop,

and made me pull off my jacket. O, how he did cut me with the stirrup!—cursing me all the while, and saying he'd kill me afore he was done with me. It seemed like he never would quit; and every stroke smarted and ached so, that I thought I couldn't stand it a minute longer. After awhile he threw the stirrup down, and drove me off into the cellar, and told me to saw wood there until he sent for me, and said if he heard the saw stop a minute at a time, he'd come down and give me ten times as much. I went down and sawed wood, until I ached so I thought I would have fallen over, but I was afraid to stop; and so I kept on, wishing I would drop down dead! After a long, long time, Millie came down to call me to dinner. I couldn't hardly eat any thing, I felt so sick. But he didn't tell me to go into the cellar again, and I began to feel a little better by night. O, how I wanted to see you!—and that night, as I lay in bed, I determined that I would come and see you any how."

The tears started from Anne's eyes, and her heart ached for the poor, abused child. And ached the more, because she had no means of softening his hard lot. She did not reply to his painful story, but his eyes read her sympathizing countenance, and he understood how much she felt for him.

"But I'll try and bear it, Anne, it won't last forever," said the little fellow, endeavoring to rally. "I'll be a man one of these days, and then no one will beat or abuse me."

"That is right, Jimmy. When we can't help ourselves, it is always best to put a good face upon matters. A change for the better will come sooner or later."

"And right soon will it come for you, Miss Anne, I hope," he said with animation.

"I could not ask for any thing better than I now have," she replied.

"But, better will come, I am sure. Ike says he means to go this very night to see Mr. Illerton, and tell him where you are; and then he'll come and marry you; and he's so rich!"

This announcement brought Anne to her feet at once, utterly confounded.

"Run home, quick!" she said, "and tell Isaac, that, if he has the least regard for my feelings, he could not injure them more than by doing what you say."

"It's no use to go, Anne," said the little boy, "because Ike's gone long ago."

"Maybe not, Jimmy, so run home as fast you can, and come again to-morrow night."

CHAPTER VII.

A SERENADE.

WHEN Anne retired to her bed that night, it was with a new feeling about her heart. The information which her little friend had conveyed to her respecting Mr. Illerton, was unexpected,

and yet pleasant in a degree that she could not account for. She had passed but half an hour with him, and had only been led to think of him, since that time, it seemed to her, in consequence of her interview resulting in a serious rupture with Mrs. Hardamer and two of her daughters. But, now, to hear that he had expressed an interest in her, was strangely pleasing. The more she thought about the matter, the more confused became her perceptions, and the more excited her feelings.

"This is not right," she at length murmured to herself, and, with an effort, endeavored to throw her thoughts off of the too absorbing subject. But, like the needle to the pole, they would return, and continued to return, in spite of every effort, as often as she attempted to force them away. Sleep finally stole over her senses; but, in slumber she thought of him still, and awoke more than once during the night, from pleasant dreams, in which his presence had made the chief delight.

On the next evening Illerton again called. He had dropped in regularly almost every evening for over a week. Through a little management, Mrs. Webster had thus far succeeded in preventing him from meeting with Anne, though she felt her desire to see them together, daily increasing. She was fully satisfied of Anne's pure and noble character, and esteemed Illerton as one of the few in society who are above reproach.

"You said you had a very nice young lady here, I believe; did you not Mrs. Webster?" he asked soon after he came in.

"Indeed, Henry! Have you just remembered it?"

"I must confess a great want of gallantry on my part, but, I suppose, extra attentions to her will atone for past neglect," he replied, smiling.

"You've grown tired, then, in your chase after an unknown charmer? Well, that is encouraging. I shall soon expect to see you as rational as ever."

"No more tired, and twice as ardent as I was a week ago," he said with animation. "But tell me the name of this young lady, with a sight of whom I have not yet been favored."

"You must promise, first, not to fall in love with her."

"I promise."

"Quite willing to commit yourself, I declare!"

"Now tell me her name, Mrs. Webster."

"Don't be so impatient, Henry. Why, what's the matter with you? You have grown very suddenly and very strangely interested in this unknown lady. You don't think, surely, that she is your pretty sewing girl?"

"Well, I do think so—And I know so!" said Illerton in a positive tone.

This was more than Mrs. Webster had expected, and she looked surprised and confused. Illerton continued—

"How could you hold me in suspense so long, Mrs. Webster, when you knew that I was half

crazy to find her! But is she not all I have described her?"

"Yes, Henry; and more, too. You know not half her worth." Mrs. Webster spoke with feeling.

"Heaven bless you, for saying so!" exclaimed the young man, seizing the hand of his maternal friend. "But I am impatient to see her. In mercy relieve my suspense."

"Be calm, Henry," returned Mrs. Webster, seriously. "Remember, that all this enthusiasm is on one side. She has not been so much interested as you have; and, if I have read her aright, thinks rarely of you, and with no feeling. You were to her an intruding stranger, and caused her much pain of mind. Except for this pain, I am inclined to think that she would hardly have thought of you again. You have got to win her, if you would wear her."

"And win her I will!" said the young man with enthusiasm.

"Be not so sure, Henry. Unless she can see in you the beauty of moral excellence, she will never yield you her hand."

"Do you think I have anything to hope, then, Mrs. Webster?" he said, in a more serious and concerned tone of voice.

"There is no one I would rather see the husband of Miss Earnest than yourself, Henry; and no one whom I think so worthy of her. Even, already, I love her as a daughter, and if you win her and your mother approves the choice, I shall have a double claim on your regard."

"You make me too happy, Mrs. Webster. But does she know of my visit here? Is she aware that I am now in the house?"

"She has not the least suspicion of it, Henry. I have carefully concealed from her, for good reasons, the fact that I knew you."

"Well, this need be no longer," he said. "I am impatient to see her face again, and once more to hear the music of her sweet voice."

Mrs. Webster rung the bell, and, to the servant who entered, said—

"Tell Anne that I should be glad to see her in the parlor."

In a brief space she entered.

"Let me introduce you to Mr. Illerton, Anne, the son of one of my best and oldest friends," said Mrs. Webster, taking her hand and advancing with her.

Anne started a little when she heard the name, and there was a slight exhibition of internal agitation; but, in a moment she was calm, and received him with the easy politeness that was so natural to her.

It is needless to detail the particulars of this interview. Illerton, of course, continued to be a constant visitor, and soon awoke a deep and trembling interest in the heart of Anne Earnest. She no longer held towards Mrs. Webster the relation of one whose services were given for hire. That lady had dissolved this connection, and had elevated her to the position of a

daughter and a companion. Anne attended her when she went into company, and was thus introduced into a select and valued circle of friends, whose rank in society was fixed upon the basis of real worth. And she soon became known as the choice of Illerton, a young man universally esteemed for his high moral principles. He was the only male representative of an old and wealthy Virginia family.

"Who do you think I met in Market street, to-day?" said Genevra Hardamer to her sister, coming in from an idle stroll, with an expression of astonishment upon her countenance.

"How should I know, I wonder?" said Gertrude, moodily; for, as usual, she was in no very amiable humor.

"Well, you'd like to know, I'm thinking."

"Who was it then?" asked Gertrude, brightening up a little. "Was it Mr. Illerton?"

"Yes. But there was somebody else with him."

"And who was it?" asked Gertrude, with an expression of lively interest.

"You wouldn't guess in a dog's age, and so I'll tell you. It was Anne Earnest."

"Who?" exclaimed Gertrude, jumping up from her chair.

"Why, that trollop we sent off for not knowing how to keep her place," said Genevra, indignantly.

"You must be mistaken, surely."

"Indeed, and then I am not, Gertrude. The insolent huzzy looked at me with an impertinent grin, and made a motion as if she were going to speak, but I turned up my nose at her, and could have spit in her face, the forward minx!"

"But what in the world is the meaning of her being in the street with Mr. Illerton?" asked Gertrude, greatly disconcerted.

"I've got my own thoughts about that," said Genevra. "I never had much opinion of him, and as for her, I don't believe she's too good for any thing."

But this insinuation by no means quieted the feelings of Gertrude. A cloud settled upon her brow, and she sat, for some time, in gloomy silence.

"He needn't think to come here again, after having been seen in Market street with a hired girl! I'll insult him if ever he sets his foot in this house, or speaks to me! I swear I will!" This last elegant expression for a lady's tongue, was enunciated by Genevra with peculiar energy, while her face warmed with accumulating passion.

"Don't make yourself a fool about it, Genevra," responded Gertrude, testily, for she could not make up her mind to relinquish all hope of Illerton.

This direct thrust, called into active play the unruly member of each of the young ladies, which continued for half an hour or more, until one of them was driven from the field.

There happened to be some unusual attrac-

tion at Peale's museum, in Holiday street, on that same evening, and Gertrude and Genevra attended, accompanied by a couple of young store-keepers. The museum was well filled, and the company made up, principally, of those whose station in life was high in the social rank. Among these, Gertrude and Genevra were quite conspicuous by their loud laughing and talking, and their excessive show of finery. Excepting themselves, there were few who were not plainly attired; and few whose manners and carriage did not stamp them as superior.

"I declare, I never saw such a company of common people together in my life," remarked Genevra to her spruce attendant. "I should really think there were none here but journey-men mechanics' wives, if some of the men did not look so elegant. Now ain't that too common a looking body to be allowed admission here!" she continued, half aloud, indicating with a toss of her reticule, a very plain, but neatly dressed lady, who was gracefully leaning upon the arm of a gentleman, and examining with him some beautiful entomological specimens.

"That lady!" replied her attendant, in a tone of surprise. "Why that is the elegant and accomplished Mrs. H——!"

"It can't be possible!" responded Genevra, incredulously.

"It is certainly none other, Miss Hardamer, for she is frequently in our store, and is every inch a lady. If pleasant manners, a perfect freedom from all affected airs of superiority, and a gentle and amiable disposition, are any indications of a lady, then is she one. I never see her in the store that I do not find my admiration of her character increasing."

The young man spoke with warmth, and Genevra was silent for a short time, and seemed offended.

"If there ain't Mr. Illerton, with that sweet girl on his arm again!" exclaimed Gertrude's young companion, thrown off his guard in his admiration of the face and form of Anne Earnest. "I wonder who she can be! As I live, the other lady on his arm is the rich and highly accomplished widow of the late Mr. Webster!"

While yet addressing his companion, Illerton with the two ladies advanced towards the lady and gentleman—Mr. and Mrs. H——, just mentioned as examining a case of entomological preparations, and, after a friendly greeting between them, Anne was introduced, and received with a cordial smile from Mr. H——, and a warm pressure of the hand, and a welcome word from his lady.

Upon all this, both Gertrude and Genevra looked with the liveliest astonishment and chagrin. The former was, however, speedily aroused from her state of surprise, by her companion who again said,—

"I wonder who she can be!"

"I can tell you," said Gertrude, with a sneer upon her lip.

"Who is she, then!—for I should like of all things to know."

"Why, she is no other than our cast off hired girl," replied Gertrude, maliciously.

"Impossible!" said the young man.

"I tell you it is possible though," said Gertrude in a low, but excited tone,—and her name is Anne Earnest. We turned her out of the house for improper conduct. She's an artful, insinuating piece of goods, and has no doubt imposed upon Mrs. Webster, who will get herself into trouble with her." All this was uttered in a tone expressive of the strongest dislike and enmity towards Anne.

Just at this moment Anne turned her face towards them, and the young man read its pure and lovely expression.

"You must be in error, surely," he said earnestly. "An evil mind never could fill so innocent an expression as that now beaming upon her face!"

"Let me show you some of these beautiful specimens, Miss Earnest," said Mrs. H— at this moment, in a voice distinctly heard by both Gertrude and her companion, and placing the arm she had disengaged from that of her husband at the moment of introduction, within that of Anne, she drew her towards the case of insects, and was soon busy in pointing out to her the rarest and most beautiful.

"So you see that I know her!" said Gertrude, with an expression of contempt.

The young man was silent, for he could not understand it. From that moment, it so happened, that neither Gertrude nor Geneva could go in any direction, without being thrown near Illerton and Anne, and finding the latter in familiar association with those in the highest station in society. Mortified, and irritated, they left the museum at an early hour, and returned home.

"I shall go crazy!" exclaimed Ike, bounding into the garret on the same night, and turning three or four summersets on and off of his bed. "I've seen enough to last me for a year! ha! ha! ha!—whoop! hold me, Tom, or I shall die!"

"You're crazy, already, I believe! But what in the name of old Clute is the matter, Ike? Come, out with it!" said Tom.

"Give me half an hour to breathe in, Tom!"

"Nonsense! What is in the wind?"

"I'm afraid it *will* kill me!" exclaimed Ike, again giving way to a loud explosion of laughter, and rolling from side to side of the bed upon which he had thrown himself.

"Don't be a fool, Ike!" broke in Bill, impatiently. "Let us hear what all this is about."

"Well, I'll try and tell you," said Ike, raising up, and endeavoring to command himself; "but you must let me laugh every now and then, or I shall burst. I went to the museum to-night, and lo! and behold! our beauties down stairs were there, all dressed up to kill, with a couple of counter-jumpers dangling at their elbows.

Didn't they cut a swath, though! They couldn't see me, no how. But there was somebody else there, too; and who do you think it was? Why, Anne Earnest, with her sweet face, looking more beautiful than ever; and she was hanging on the arm of Mr. Illerton, who was all attention to her!"

"You must be joking, Ike," said Tom, incredulously.

"No I'm not, though, I'm in dead earnest!"

"And did our living beauties see them?"

"See them? Of course they did!"

"And how did they take it? Do say, Ike?"

"Just wait a bit 'till I get that far, will you? And there was somebody else along with them, too—Mrs. Webster, the rich lady that she lives with; and she would lean forward towards Anne, every now and then, so kind; and look her in the face when she was speaking, with an expression that said, as plain as words—'But you are a dear good girl, Anne, and I love you!'"

"The devil!" ejaculated Bill.

"It's all as true as death, boys! And that ain't all! Mrs. Webster, you know, is tip-top here, and she would every now and then introduce Anne to some lady or gentleman as much above our girls, as the sun is above the moon; and they would treat her so polite, and seem so glad to make her acquaintance!"

"O, but that is good!" exclaimed Tom.

"If you'd only seen the accomplished Mrs. H—," continued Ike, "draw her arm through Anne's, and walk about the museum with her, showing her all the pretty things; and then 'a' seen how struck down in the mouth Gertrude was, and how mad Geneva looked, it would have been something to remember as long as you live. I wouldn't have begrudged five dollars to have seen the show."

"That is elegant!" said Bill.

"I never saw any body so cut," continued Ike. "They were all down in the mouth. And wasn't I glad to see it!"

"Did Anne see you?" asked Tom.

"Once, but I kept out of her way."

"Did she speak to you?" said Bill.

"I wasn't very near; but when she saw me, she nodded her head, and smiled so sweetly. It wasn't a sneaking nod and a stolen smile. All was all earnest, and above board."

"It's the best thing that has ever happened!" said Tom. "Our old queen of Sheba, you know, goes her death on people's finding their level and keeping it," remarked Ike. "Anne's found her level at last, and I should like to know how many miles it is above the platform upon which she and her young jay-birds stand."

"It's so high, that they'll never reach it; that's certain," said Bill.

So excited were the boys, that they sat up until after one o'clock, talking over the matter. About this time they were attracted by a sudden burst of music in the street.

"Somebody's serenading our girls, as sure as

"I'm alive!" said Ike, jumping up, and going to the window.

"It seems that all the fools ain't dead yet," quietly remarked Tom, rising more slowly, and taking his station along side of Ike.

"It's as free for us as for any body, that's one consolation," added Bill, crowding in between his two worthy associates.

"That's too good music for them," said Ike, after they had all listened, in silence, to a well played air on three or four instruments—"too good by half! I could do the business in the right style for them."

"You? Why you can't play!" said Bill.

"Can't I?" responded Ike. "You've forgotten the sweet music I discoursed for them one night on the lap-stone."

"True! true! I *had* forgotten that," said Bill. "Suppose, Ike, we give 'em a touch one of these dark nights, any how. We could do it, couldn't we?"

"To a charm!" replied Ike, slapping the last speaker upon the shoulder. "That's a grand idea, Bill! Why didn't we think of it before?"

"What instrument can you play on, Ike?" asked Bill.

"Me! Why, I'm hard to beat with the brush and scraper. I used to practise with the chimney-sweeps when I was only knee-high to a duck. I got so I could play almost any tune. Dick, up the alley, will lend me his instruments; and then I'll do my part in all sorts of style. But what can you play on, Bill?"

"I've no particular skill in this way; but I think I could manage to do a little on the old saw with a good new file."

"Capital! But what are you worth, Tom?—are you at all musical?"

In answer to this, the garret was filled with the gruntings of a hog, and the squealing of pigs in swinish accompaniment.

"You see I can do a little in the line," remarked Tom, quietly, as the discordant, ear-piercing noise subsided.

"So I should think. You shall lead the orchestra, Tom. But three of us wont make a full band. How shall we fill the vacancies? We want at least double our number."

"Leave that to me," said Bill. "I am acquainted with several amateurs, who will cheerfully lend us their valuable aid. For instance.—There is Tom Dunn, who is quite *catagorical*, as they say; and Sandy Patterson, who, as a living trombone, is superior to any bloody-noun I ever heard in Stricker's dam. John Neal is a dabster on the conch; and, if others are wanted, I can count three or four more."

"The fuller the band, the better," responded Ike.

"If a good large bull-dog would add any thing to the harmony of the music, Sam Miller can bark to any tune."

"Prime! now ain't it!" said Ike, warmly. "When shall we do the thing?"

"The sooner the better," replied Tom.

"Let it be some dark night about one o'clock, then," said Ike.

"Agreed!" responded the two associates. The serenade being arranged, the boys retired to bed; but it was a long time before their senses were locked in sleep, for their minds were too actively occupied with their intended exhibition of musical skill.

In about a week they had every thing ready to begin. The night was dark and cloudy, and in every way favorable for the new serenade. They had found four boys besides themselves, as ripe for fun and frolic as they were. To avoid suspicion, our three chaps went all up stairs, talking loud enough to be heard, at ten o'clock, the usual hour of retiring. In the garret they made a clatter of shoes, &c., and then threw themselves upon the beds, and rolled about there, that the noise of the ricketty bedsteads might be distinctly heard below. It was twelve before they thought it safe to descend from their attic, which was accomplished in a way peculiar to themselves. A long back building was connected with the main building, and from this they could descend to a lower range, connecting with the house below; and from this, again, to a high wall shutting in the yard of that house from an alley that ran immediately in the rear. In this way they could readily get out and in, without any suspicion being excited in the family, and in this way, the three companions in mischief escaped from the house on the evening in question.

Joining their four associates, all armed with their several instruments of music, they held a consultation, and after arranging all preliminaries, and being certain, from his warning cry to all rogues and mischief plotters, that the watchman was making the best of his way to the other end of his ward, and would not pass there again for the next hour, they stole quietly around in front, and arranged themselves before the house. It was by this time nigh on to one o'clock, and as it was a very dark, and cloudy night, there were no persons in the street.

"One at a time, to prepare for the full chorus of instruments," said Ike. "Strike up, Tom!"

Instantly the air was filled with a combination of grunting and squealing, that seemed to come from half a dozen alarmed swinish mothers, and their hungry offspring. Then came half a dozen musical sounds from Ike's brush and scraper, clear and distinct.

"Now Bill!" said the leader.

And Bill's saw and file set every dog's teeth, in the whole neighborhood, on edge, and waked them up just enough to answer promptly Sam Miller's real bull-dog bark, that was responded to by Tom Dunn in a caterwaul, that seemed like the dying confession of some old roof-scambler.

"Bloody-noun! bloody-noun! bloody-noun! chip!" rose clear and full, as the last note of feline distress died away in the distance. This was succeeded by three or four blasts from John Neal's conch shell.

Bill's new fangled violin, as he called it, startled every sleeper in the house, and before the final blast on the conch, preparatory to the full chorus, several windows were thrown open, and half a dozen old and young Hardamers were straining their eyes into the darkness.

"Now give it to 'em, free and easy, boys!" said Ike, and away they went, making a most diabolical combination of sounds. Clear and distinct above the whole, and at regular intervals, would come in "*bloody-noun!*" "*bloody-noun!*" always accompanied with the deep-toned bull-dog bark, and winding off with a most ear-piercing feline scream. Steadily, and with a most unmusical, nerve-thrilling screech, did Bill work away upon his old saw, but by all his efforts he could not drown the ringing noise of Ike's brush and scraper. For full ten minutes they continued their serenade, without a moment's cessation. At the end of that time, Hardamer sallied out of his front door, armed with an old musket. This apparition brought on the *finale*, and then there was a separation, in different ways, of the whole band of serenaders, who scampered off in double quick time.

Hurrying around the square, and up the alley, as fast as they could, our three young rebels scrambled up the roofs of the different houses, in their way to their garret, and made an entrance there in three minutes from the time Hardamer had dispersed the band. Rapidly disrobing themselves, they beat a quick retreat to bed, and were, to all appearances, sound asleep, when their master, whose suspicions had been aroused, came up into the garret. His finding them all stowed snugly away, puzzled him a good deal, but their presence there was conclusive of their innocence, and so he withdrew without a word.

"Old Lignumvitæ was just too late," whispered Ike.

"We've made a narrow escape, I'm thinking," said Tom.

"Wouldn't we have had a tea-party, though, if old Lignumvitæ'd got here before us!" added Bill. "He'd never forgiven that. But I wonder how the Misses Hardamer were pleased. I hope they didn't faint under the operation."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CHANGES OF A YEAR.

We change the scene, now, to a farm-house in Virginia. It is small and neat, and stands on a slight eminence, overlooking, on either side, a well cultivated farm of some five hundred acres. A negro quarter stands at the distance of about a hundred yards, in and about which are a dozen blacks—men, women and children. An elderly man is walking backwards and forwards before the door of the dwelling, in the cool of the evening, and by his side is a young

man, in earnest conversation with him. Sometimes the elder of the two walks forward rapidly, and sometimes pauses and looks into the face of his companion with an expression of painful surprise. Both are dressed in the ordinary, coarse, every day clothing of working farmers. Let us approach them. The old man is speaking.

"How could you keep this so long from us, William?"

"I have not had the heart to mention it, father. My wrong doings so distressed you, that I dared not mention this, until an oppressing sense of duty has forced from me the unwilling confession."

"And you have not heard from her during all the past year?"

"Never once. I left her without even an intimation of my intention to go away. She knows not whether I am dead or alive. And I am as ignorant of her condition."

"O, my son! How could you find it in your heart to act thus?"

"No one knows, father, how far from right principles he may be led, until he begins to allow his feet to diverge from the ways of rectitude. I wasted the money your labor procured for me; became involved in debt, and married to obtain money to extricate myself from my difficulties. The father of my wife, displeased with our marriage, which was a secret one, would have nothing to do with us; and, heartily disliking the woman I had married, I left her to her fate. No doubt her father received her as soon as he was sure I had left the city."

"Merciful heaven!" ejaculated the old man, clasping his hands, and lifting his eyes upwards.

"It was a wicked thing, father," responded the young man, in a subdued tone, "but, if not too late, I would gladly retrace some of my steps."

"It is never too late, my son, to make the effort to repair our wrong doings. You must go at once to Baltimore, and bring home your wife."

"That is just what I wish to do. I cannot say that I ever had any affection for her, but duty, now, must take the place of love."

"Under any circumstances, we must do our duty," said the father. "I'm afraid this will almost break your mother's heart. In all your wandering from right, she never thought you capable of such an act. But I must break it to her this evening, for to-morrow you must leave for Baltimore. Not a day should be lost, for no one can tell what a day may bring forth."

Both now entered the house, and the mother met them at the door. Her eye had often turned towards them, from the window, with an expression of concern, while they walked before the house, for she saw that they were conversing on some subject of painful interest; and now she looked into each face with a glance of earnest inquiry. The young man could not

withstand that look, for the tears filled into his eyes, and he passed her hurriedly.

"Let me know all, John," said the mother, looking into her husband's face with an appealing expression. "It is better that I should know all."

"Perhaps it is," said the old man. "Our William married more than a year ago, and deserted his young wife in a few weeks."

"Father of mercies!" she ejaculated, in a low, subdued tone of voice, lifting upwards her aged eyes, and clasping her hands together. The young man saw the movement from the adjoining room, and understood its meaning too well. Covering his face with his hands, he leaned against the wall, and groaned aloud. That groan of deep, and heart-aching distress, reached the mother's ears, and turned the tide of her feelings. Instantly she went in to him, and, taking his hand, said, in a broken voice, while the tears rained down her time-furrowed cheeks—

"My son, the past cannot be recalled; but the present must do all that can be done to atone for the past. Who, or what is the woman you have married?"

"Not such a woman as I ought to have made the daughter of so good a mother. But, she is respectable, moves in good society, and her father is rich."

"Then, William, how could you desert her?"

"Because, I married her like a villain, only for her money. Failing to get that from her prudent old father, who was displeased at the marriage, I left her."

"O, my son," replied his mother, greatly moved, "what a world of trouble have you brought upon yourself. But, I trust it is not yet too late to repair, in some degree, the injury you have done. You must go for her, and bring her home, if she will return with you."

"That is just what I wish to do. But you will not find her, I fear, all that you could wish. She is the eldest of three grown up sisters, who have been raised in idleness, are poorly educated in any thing substantial, and full of false notions. They are proud and envious, and, of course, weak-minded."

"Let us hope that a year of painful disappointment may have greatly changed her. Affliction and trouble do wonders for us, sometimes."

"True, mother; for I am a living witness of their efficacy."

"I think your father should go with you. You have deceived the family once, and her father would act wisely to put no further confidence in you," said the mother.

"She is right," responded the father. "But I cannot be ready for several days."

"Then I had better wait, father, for I fear to go alone, lest she refuse to return with me."

The reader, of course, recognizes, in this family, that of Anderson, who married Genevieve Hardamer. He had gone off to the South,

and his money very soon becoming exhausted, he joined a club of gamblers, and lived upon the dishonest gains of his craft, for six or seven months, when he was taken down with a southern fever. From this he recovered after great and protracted suffering, a changed man, at least, so far as intention was concerned. He immediately returned home, and joined his father in the honest toil of a farmer. Gradually his better feelings gained strength, and he continued to bring out into action what he saw to be right, at the same time, steadily resisting his wrong desires. Finally, he perceived it to be his duty to return to his wife, and, acting out the principle of obedience, he made known to his father, the painful secret that was weighing upon his mind.

A single year will often work wonderful changes.

We have advanced the reader a full twelve-month in the history of Anderson; let us go back and bring up the rest of our characters.

The novel serenade which had been given for the benefit of Misses Gertrude and Genevra, did not fall upon their ears alone. The air is an unselfish element, and never can be bought over to subserve purely selfish feelings; and so, on the occasion alluded to, it diffused the harsh din around as liberally as it will the sweetest melody. A knowledge of the circumstance spread, and soon became known far and near, as an excellent piece of fun. Nor did they escape the annoyance of its being known, for there are always in society those who delight in telling unpleasant news, and several of these individuals were among the young ladies' acquaintances, and took especial pains to let them know all that was said about it in connection with their names. The mortification was to them, a terrible one.

Gertrude insisted upon it that Tom was one of the company, for it was a well known fact, she urged, that he could imitate the squealing of pigs to perfection.

"That may all be true enough," her father would reply, who had his own suspicions, and his own reasons for not wishing them confirmed—"But I found Tom in bed when I went up into the garret directly after. How could he have been there and in the street at the same time?"

"But Millie says," she replied, one day, after this oft repeated answer, "that Tom and the other boys are out until twelve o'clock almost every night, and that they climb up on the roof of the back building, and get into the garret window when they come home. I have no doubt but that he came in that way after his outrageous conduct, and got into bed before you thought of going into the garret."

"Does Millie say that?" asked her father quickly.

"Yes, indeed, she does."

"Call her up!" he said.

Millie soon made her appearance.

"Did you say that the boys were out almost every night until twelve and one o'clock, and that they get in by climbing up over the back building?" said Hardamer, sternly.

Millie looked at Gertrude and hesitated.

"Do you hear? you black wench!" he said angrily.

"I b'lieve er did say so," replied Millie.

"You believe you did! Don't you know that you did? ha?"

"P'raps I did. But I only thought so," said Millie, who had no wish to become an informer against the boys.

"What right had you to think so, ha?" said her master.

"I d'no, sir," responded Millie, with a most silly expression and tone.

"Clear out into the kitchen, you stupid huzzy, you!" said Hardamer in a loud passionate voice, assuming, at the same, a threatening attitude.

Millie retreated in confusion to her own part of the house.

"I don't make any thing out of this," resumed Hardamer, "but I'll catch 'em at their capers if they cut any." And so saying, he went down stairs into the shop. It was just about half past three o'clock, and, as he entered the back door, a notary entered the front door of his shop, and presented him with a protest. It was a note of five thousand dollars, which he had endorsed for a large shoe-dealer up town, and was the first of five, all of which would mature in the course of the next six days.

"Have you heard the news?" asked a neighbor, stepping in at the moment, "Mr. — the large shoe-dealer has failed; and it is said to be a desperate bad one too. He won't be able to pay over fifty cents in the dollar."

"Then I'm a ruined man!" exclaimed Hardamer, sinking back upon a chair.

The rumor was too true. Within the next two months Hardamer's property was thrown into market, and forced sales effected at ruinous prices. His credit was saved, but it was at the expense of nearly all he was worth. Common estimation had named his property far above its real value. His daughters had looked upon it as almost inexhaustible. But a loss of twenty-five thousand dollars, or, rather, a sacrifice of property, valued at forty thousand dollars, took nearly every thing he was worth.

To be thrown back, thus, at his age, with a large family, tended in no degree to soothe a temper, naturally overbearing and irritable. All he now had left, was the house in which was his shop and dwelling, his stock of boots, shoes, leather, &c., and about one thousand dollars in turnpike road stock, twenty per cent. below par. To this scrip he had been holding on for the last three years, in hopes that it would rise to par, but, now, a pressing demand for money in his business, required him to sell, just as there was some indication of an improve-

ment; and eight hundred dollars were received for what originally cost him one thousand.

Before selling, however, he made an effort to raise a few hundred dollars, in hopes that the stock would go up speedily. Waiting upon an old friend, between whom and himself had passed numerous business favors during the ten years previous, he asked him for the loan of a note of five hundred dollars.

"H-h-hem! Mr. Hardamer. What secu—" and the old friend paused as if unwilling to utter the word.

"Security did you mean to say, sir?" asked Hardamer, his face flushed, and his eyes sparkling.

"Ye-ye-yes, Mr. Hardamer, that is what I meant to say. Things have changed a little of late. We have to be cautious, you know."

"I want to know, sir, if you mean to say, that because I am unfortunate, I am no longer honest?" said Hardamer, placing himself before his old friend, and looking him fiercely in the face.

"No, I did not mean to say any such thing," he replied, much embarrassed. "But you are too sensitive; you cannot, reasonably, expect to get favors, now you are reduced, such as was readily extended to you before the failure that stripped you of nearly every thing."

Hardamer looked him a moment in the face with a strong expression of contempt, and turning upon his heel, left the store without uttering a word in reply.

Returning to his shop, he determined to sell his scrip at once. But the necessity for losing two hundred dollars on it, was by no means a pleasant idea, and he finally concluded to wait upon a certain individual who could always procure a loan, on good security, for a consideration.

"I want five hundred dollars," said Hardamer, entering the office of this certain individual, in the neighborhood of the Exchange.

"I don't know what to say, Mr. Hardamer; money's dreadful tight just now," replied the broker, who knew the real strength of every business man in town.

"Well, what if it is tight?" said the applicant, pettishly, "I've good security to offer."

"Whose note is it?" asked the broker in an indifferent tone.

"It's to be my own note, with collateral in the shape of ten shares of — Turnpike Road Stock."

"That stock's poor stuff!" remarked the broker, in a calm, indifferent tone.

"It is worth eighty dollars now, and is rising," said Hardamer.

"You couldn't force a sale at seventy," replied the broker.

"Why, it's quoted at eighty-one, this morning."

The broker compressed his lips, turned up his nasal protuberance a little, and gave his head a knowing toss.

"What do you mean by that," asked Hardamer, a little irritated.

"It's all a gull!" said the broker. "There isn't a particle of rise—in fact, the market has a downward tendency."

"Well, up or down, Mr. Centum, will you lend me five hundred dollars for sixty days on this security?" said Hardamer, decidedly.

"I'm afraid of it," replied Mr. Centum.

"Then I must bid you good morning," said Hardamer, rising.

As he was about leaving the door, the broker, who had walked out with him, remarked, in a quiet, careless tone, that he knew a man, who might, probably, loan on it; and that if he was particularly in want of the money, he would try and make the negotiation for him, as a personal favor.

The bait took. Hardamer expressed his gratitude for the kind offer, and promised to call in an hour. In an hour he was again at the office of Mr. Centum.

"Well, what was the result of your application?" he asked, with evident anxiety.

"He didn't seem much inclined," replied the broker, coldly. "Has no confidence in the security."

"Why, I am sure the security is safe and ample."

"You may think so, but he don't," replied Mr. Centum. "However, I saw an old chap who does things in this line whenever he can make a good operation. He's willing to make the loan, but I'm afraid the terms are too hard. The old fellow hasn't much conscience left."

"Well, what does he ask?" inquired Hardamer, with nervous impatience.

"I almost hate to name it," said the broker. "He offers to let you have four hundred and fifty dollars for sixty days, for your note of five hundred dollars, secured by a provisional transfer of the stock."

"That's five per cent. a month! You are not in earnest, certainly!" exclaimed Hardamer, in indignant astonishment.

"Yes, I am, I do assure you. That is the best I can do for you; but it is a ruinous discount," said Mr. Centum, sympathizingly.

"I'll sell my stock first!" responded Hardamer, warmly. "I'm not going to be swindled in that way!"

"Perhaps, in the course of to-morrow I might be able to do something better for you," said the broker, who found that he had attempted to go rather too deep into his customer.

On the next day Hardamer called on him again. "Does things look any brighter to-day?" he said, putting on as cheerful a countenance as possible.

"I've seen several persons since yesterday," replied Mr. Centum, "and the best I can do for you, is four per cent. a month, besides my commissions."

Hardamer turned on his heel and left the office. That day he sold his stock for eight hundred dollars. The money realized on this sale was soon exhausted in the payment of sundry regular business notes. Others were still

out. To meet these, now became a serious matter, for, although his business continued good, his expenses were very heavy, causing a constant, and large drain of money. His ledger showed a fair balance of "good accounts;" but every tradesman knows how much to calculate upon "good accounts" in a time of need.

It was about two months from the time of his first interview with the broker, that Hardamer found the due-day of a note drawn for three hundred dollars, approaching with unwelcome rapidity. All that he could do in the way of pushing collections among his numerous good customers, availed but little in making up the desired amount. His attempt to borrow a note from an old business friend had convinced him, that his fair reputation had departed with his money, and his proud spirit turned from the idea of again asking a favor of any one, and running the risk of refusal and insult. But time rolled on, even until the day of payment, and he was still short about one hundred and fifty dollars. All attempts to force collections farther for that day were abandoned about twelve o'clock, and still the amount wanted was no less. Having always managed his business with great prudence, he had rarely been required to raise funds when a note fell due, and in the few instances that it had occurred, he was at no loss to find plenty of persons to accommodate him. (Of course he was now in a state of great uneasiness. Restless and excited, he paced the narrow avenue behind his counter, backwards and forwards, laboring in thought for some expedient by which he could rescue his note from its threatened danger. Suddenly pausing, he leaned upon the counter, with his head between his hands, and remained in that position for nearly ten minutes.

"It must be done!" he said, in a low, sad voice; and turning to his desk, he drew a check for one hundred and seventy dollars, dated fifteen days ahead, and, putting it into his pocket book, went out, and proceeded to the office of Mr. Centum.

That individual he found sitting in his office, with his legs upon the table, and a newspaper held before his face, as if reading; but his eyes were with his thoughts, and they had more to do with the omnipotent dollar than with the news of the day.

"How are you to-day, Hardamer?" he said, with an air of importance, not even rising from his chair, or changing his position.

"Pretty well, I thank you," replied Hardamer, somewhat meekly. "Can you do any thing with this for me?" presenting his check.

The broker looked at it a moment, and shook his head.

"I'm afraid not," he said indifferently. "If it was a good business note, I could get it done for you easily, at the rate of two per cent. a month. But people are afraid of checks. Besides, you know, your credit is not what it used to be. There was a time, when any thing with

your name on it was as good as gold ; but now it is very different. Do you want the money badly !”

“ Indeed I do !” replied Hardamer, earnestly. “ If I don’t get it before three, it ’ll be all over with me.”

This communication was particularly gratifying to the broker.

“ Don’t you think you can get it for me !” asked Hardamer, appealingly. “ You don’t know how much you will oblige me !”

“ Nothing would give me greater pleasure,” replied Mr. Centum. “ But I am somewhat doubtful. I am willing to try, however, and will do my best. Leave me the check, and call at half past one.”

“ I will be here to the minute,” said Hardamer, handing over the check. “ Do your very best to get it for me, Mr. Centum !”

“ I will, most certainly. Good morning, Mr. Hardamer.”

As soon as his intended victim had departed, the broker took from the drawer a long narrow piece of paper, dated upon that day, upon which were two columns of figures, and a column of names. The names indicated the drawers or endorsers of notes ; the first column the “ face” of the notes, and the last column the amount of “ shave,” or usurious interest, obtained upon them. Without hesitation, he added the name of Hardamer, entered the check, one hundred and eighty dollars, fifteen days, and in the last column extended ten dollars. Then running up this last column rapidly, he ascertained its amount to be fifty dollars.

“ Pretty fair, that, by twelve o’clock !” he soliloquized—“ forty of it in hand, and old Hardamer’s as sure as if I had it in my fingers. Let me see how my bank account holds out !”

Turning to his check book, he entered the last check on the margin, and subtracting it from the preceding amount, closed the book with a smile of satisfaction.

“ Twenty thousand and all safe,” he said musingly, “ and five thousand sure to be paid in before three o’clock. I shall be flush to-morrow. Old Hardamer’s getting into trouble ; but he’s honest to the back-bone, and owns the property he occupies, all in fee simple. He’d sell his coat before he’d wrong any one out of a dollar. I must keep my eye on him. If I manage him rightly, he’ll be worth to me a cool thousand, before he’s all done for. I must turn him round gently until I get him completely into my power, and then go it on him strong. It takes me to do the thing neatly !”—and he laughed to himself, with a low, peculiar, chuckling laugh.

At half past one, precisely, Hardamer entered the broker’s office. Just five minutes before that time, Mr. Centum stepped out, and circling the square at a quick pace, returned as Hardamer entered.

“ Well, what’s the word !” asked Hardamer, affecting an air of indifference, while his heart

beat violently, and he felt a slight tremor all over.

“ I’ve been running about ever since for you,” said the broker, panting as naturally, and wiping off the perspiration as earnestly, as if he were in a great heat from over exertion and fatigue, “ and found a man, at last, who has a little money by him. He says he will do it for you. He was somewhat fearful at first, but I told him you were as good as gold, and honest to the back-bone.”

“ Thank you ! thank you !” responded Hardamer, warmly. “ How much did he charge !”

“ Ten dollars. It’s a good deal, I know ; but the man who took it never will enter into any operation for less than ten dollars. I can’t charge my commission on this ; it would be too hard upon you.”

“ I can do no better now, of course,” said Hardamer, who gladly accepted of one hundred and sixty dollars for his check, although the rate of discount was over one hundred per cent. per annum. Still, it was only a single transaction ; and the loss was but ten dollars. “ And who wouldn’t sacrifice ten dollars,” he said to himself, as he walked towards the bank, “ to have his note safely out, and his mind at ease.”

CHAPTER IX.

TRouble ON BOTH SIDES OF THE HOUSE.

“ OLD Lignumvite’s getting as cross as a bear, lately,” said Bill, on the afternoon of the day on which Hardamer had passed through his first shaving operation. “ We’ll have to check him again. It wont answer to let him have the upper hand of us ; if we do, there ’ll be no living in the house with him.”

“ He musn’t talk to me again, like he did a little while ago, I can tell him ; or he’ll get his own pretty quick ! I’ve no notion of it,” responded Ike.

“ He talked about giving me the stirrup, yesterday,” said Tom. “ I should just like to see him try that game once ; I’d show him how much more interesting it was when played by two, instead of one. Since he’s got to going down hill, there’s no living with him. It’s snarl and jaw all the while !”

“ He’s done one good thing, though,” said Ike.

“ What is that !”

“ Why, he’s set our beauties up stairs to work. If I didn’t see Gertrude trying to make a shirt yesterday, I wish I may be shot ! Millie says all three are at it, but none of ’em, except Genevieve, who is now the best of the bunch, knows much about it. Whenever any body calls in, Gertrude and Genevieve hide their work away, and then sit with their hands in their laps until the visitor has departed.”

“ It ain’t possible, Ike, that they are such fools !”

"How can you ask such a question, Tom? But, Millie says, and I say too, that they'll not hold out long. They are both too proud and too lazy to work."

"That's a fact," said Bill, energetically.

"It's most time we gave 'em another serenade. Suppose we amuse them a little to-night?" said Ike.

"Agreed!" responded his two companions, heartily, and that night about twelve o'clock, the whole family were awakened by another full chorus of diabolical sounds. Instantly Hardamer seized his old musket, which had been loaded some time before pretty plentifully with small shot, and throwing open the window, blazed away right in the midst of them. Not one of the young serenaders but had a taste of the shot, but it happened, fortunately, that none received any wound of consequence; the little messengers of punishment only penetrating the flesh in unimportant parts of the body. It is needless to say, that there was a sudden cessation of the music, and a silent scampering of the young rascals. Putting down his gun, Hardamer proceeded at once to the garret, and lo! there was no one there but little Jimmy.

"Where are the boys!" he asked in a loud quick voice.

"They're gone out, sir," replied the frightened boy.

"Gone out where?"

"They went out of the window, sir."

"When?"

"About an half hour ago, sir," said Jimmy, trembling from head to foot, he scarcely knew why.

Hardamer turned on his heel, and went down stairs quickly, but returned in a minute with a cowhide in his hand. He did not wait long before the three boys came scrambling up the roof, smarting from the few small shot that had penetrated beneath the skin; and frightened, dreadfully, at the idea of being wounded. Ike jumped from the window sill to the floor, first, and upon him was made the opening demonstration of his master's skill in using the cowhide. Heavily and with rapidity did the blows descend for the space of nearly a minute, by which time Bill and Tom were fairly at the scene of action. Ike had begun to recover a little from the surprise and confusion of the sudden attack, and, watching his opportunity, caught at the cowhide, and jerked it from his master's hand.

"Come on, boys!" he called out, "let's give the devil a taste of his own porridge." And flourishing the cowhide about his head, he brought it across the face of his master with tremendous force.

Quick as thought, Bill and Tom responded to the summons, and before Hardamer had recovered from the sudden attack, Bill struck him a heavy blow under the ear, with his fist, which brought him at full length upon the floor.

"Now slash it into him, Ike!" cried Bill,

"and if he attempts to rise, I'll beat his brains out with this boot-jack!" picking up the article named, and brandishing it over the head of his master in a threatening manner.

Ike did not wait for a second invitation, but poured in the blows with the cowhide thick and fast.

But Hardamer was too much excited by this unexpected scene, to lay quietly upon the floor. Disregarding Bill's boot-jack, and not seeming to feel its force, as it descended upon his head, Hardamer sprung to his feet, and catching Ike by the collar, dealt him two or three tremendous blows with his fist, which, in turn, brought that individual to the floor.

A new thought now struck him, and, retreating at once from the battle ground, he called in the aid of three watchmen, who proceeded, mace in hand, to the garret. Suspecting the design of Hardamer, the boys barricaded the door, after driving a nail over the latch, by bringing their bedsteads against it. But this only served to embarrass the watchmen a little, not to keep them out. They quickly forced the door.

"Touch me at your peril!" said Ike, as the three rebels crowded together at the one end of the room, armed in no very offensive manner; their several weapons consisting of a boot-jack, a broom handle, and a heavy, knotted cane.

"You'd better give in at once, my lads," said one of the watchmen, brandishing his mace. "We're used to handling *men*." And so saying, he advanced upon them with his two associates. Each watchman singled his prize, and made his capture with an ease and quickness, that showed him to be a perfect master of his trade.

That night our serenaders were quartered in the watch house. On the next day, they were committed by a magistrate, and on the third day were tried before the City Court for an assault upon their master. Being indented apprentices, and the assault proved, they were ordered ten lashes, each, by the court. Previous to this, however, a surgeon had examined their wounds, and removed about twenty small shot.

On the night after this flogging, the three boys bundled up their clothes, and leaving the house by the garret window, took a final leave of their master. In this act was consummated the evils of improper discipline. Had Hardamer treated them, from the first, as he would have liked his own children treated, and carefully watched over them with other than exclusively selfish feelings, he would never have found them opposing and insulting his authority, nor have been deserted by them at a time when he more than ever stood in need of their services. Nor would he have been the cause of three stout lads, utterly unfit to govern themselves, breaking loose upon the world, to add, in all probability, to its annals of misery and crime. Had he governed his own household aright,

children and apprentices, the former would have been respected by the latter, and the latter kindly treated by the former. No such an act as the mock serenade, could, possibly, have occurred. But Hardamer started wrong from the beginning, and the evils inherent in his family government, increased, until they were consummated in open insubordination.

The loss of his three boys, just at this time, was, to Hardamer, a serious matter. It required him to seat three more journeymen, at ten dollars a week each; thus, in his embarrassed condition, increasing his cash expenses about twenty dollars per week; for, taking the year round, it had not cost him, in the way he fed and clothed the three boys, over ten dollars, weekly. This additional cause of embarrassment, and consequent anxiety, tended to increase his despondency, and to irritate his feelings in a very great degree. Burdened with a large and helpless family, from whom he received no sympathy, he felt himself unequal to the task imposed upon him. All he could do to press sales and force collections, was of no avail in keeping him even, when the due-days of notes rolled around. Doing only a retail business, he rarely had a note of any consequence to offer for discount; and, therefore, whenever short of money, he had but one resource, and that was his friend Mr. Centum, who never failed him at the hour of extremity.

Six months rolled away, and during that time he had become more and more inextricably involved with his money-lending friend. Hardly a day passed that some operation was not required, either in taking up notes, renewing checks, or extending loans, and, in every case where either of the latter were effected, it was at a ruinous sacrifice; for the broker, in extending a previous loan for a new term of twenty or thirty days, beyond which he rarely went, always made it the excuse for taking an exorbitant interest, screening himself, too, behind some pretended invisible wealthy individual, who would receive nothing less. During the first six months that Hardamer remained in the web of difficulties which the broker was weaving around him, and by which he was embarrassing his movements more and more every day, that individual succeeded in getting from him, in unreasonable discounts, about five hundred dollars, and was, at the end of that time, bleeding him at the rate of from thirty to forty dollars, weekly; and yet, at the same time, did not risk in all over fifteen hundred dollars, to secure which he had obtained a mortgage on Hardamer's house, worth, at least, with the ground, five or six thousand dollars.

Amid all these increasing difficulties, Hardamer found no sympathy in his family, except from Genevieve, who saw from his manner, that he had sore trials to contend with. What these really were, neither she nor the rest knew; but, as her own heart had been deeply tried, she had learned to feel for others. Her

father failed not to perceive the difference in her manner towards him, and her willingness to make herself useful; and gradually his feelings warmed towards her. As for Geneva and Gertrude, the more difficult it became to get money out of their father, to spend in all kinds of fashionable extravagances, the more importunate did they become, and the more insulting in their manner towards him.

Time had rolled on to past mid-winter, and during this gay season, these two young ladies had dashed away with as much show and extravagance as if their father had been made of money. Indeed, from the time it became known that he had met with a heavy loss, they had considered it as their true policy to dress more extravagantly than ever, to force people into the belief that they were still rich, and that their riches were inexhaustible. Hardamer, whose mind was greatly confused in relation to the true state of his business, imagining that it would yield him at least the usual income he had derived from it, felt in no degree inclined to deny his family any indulgence they had been used to. But the loss of a thousand dollars a year, from the desertion of his boys, and the abstracting of more than that sum to pay usurious interest, made a very material difference in the state of matters and things. And, by the end of the first six months of his downward career, he began to think seriously of retrenchment and reform. For reasons, other than economical ones, he had insisted on his three oldest daughters doing all the sewing of the family; but Gertrude and Geneva had receded from that state of compulsory industry, and upon Genevieve had fallen the entire burden of the ordinary sewing. Of course, the young ladies' dresses were still made by the most fashionable and expensive dress-maker in the city.

In looking over his expense account one day, he was by no means satisfied with the large sums that were posted under the titles of "Dry Goods," "Millinery" and "Dress Making."

"This will never do!" he said to himself, closing the book with emphatic force. It so happened that there was to be a fashionable gathering at the Assembly Rooms during the next week, and Gertrude and Geneva had received invitations. It was to be a splendid affair, the last and most imposing of the winter series. Each of the girls had one or two dangles in tow, and as this was to be the last grand assemblage of the season, they were nervously anxious to accomplish something. Fully determined to eclipse even themselves, they made application, on the evening succeeding the day on which their father had determined to reform them a little, for fifty dollars a-piece.

"I haven't got it to spare, just now," he replied, rather gruffly.

"But we must have it!" said Geneva.

"And pray, why must you have it, Miss?" responded the father, sensibly irritated.

"Because there's to be a splendid ball next week, and neither of us has got any thing fit to wear."

"Then you'll both have to stay at home, I'm thinking."

"But pa," urged Gertrude, "we *must* go; I wouldn't stay away for the world!"

"Well, go! Nobody wants to prevent you."

"Yes, but we must have something to go in!" responded Gertrude. "Neither of us have a ball dress fit to be seen in at such a place. All the dresses are to be new and splendid; and I, for one, have no notion of being thrown into the shade."

"Then you'll both have to stay home, let me tell you," said the father in a quick excited voice, "for not one dollar shall you have to waste on such tom-fooleries! I'm going to put a stop to these things! No later than yesterday I had your extravagance thrown into my teeth, when I asked for a little time on one of your outrageous dry goods bills!"

Gertrude and Geneva raised their hands and eyes in astonishment; and in a few minutes pumped up a plentiful effusion of tears.

But Hardamer was mailed in triple armor against all such assaults.

"You needn't set up any blubbing and crying here, my young ladies, now I can tell you!" he said in a firmer and more determined voice. "Hereafter, and you might as well know it at once, you must not consider yourselves as a rich man's daughters, with money to waste. I've got my hands full and my heart full too, to get you something to eat and decent clothes to wear; and, with these, you will have to be content. So, you may just as well come down from your high notions. You have no business at this ball! It is no place for a *poor man's daughters*." So saying, the father turned abruptly from the room.

"Humph!" said Gertrude, drying her tears in a moment—"A poor man's daughters! Ain't that too bad! That's the first time I ever heard myself called a poor man's daughter, and I'd just like to hear any body else say so to me! A poor man's daughter, indeed!"

"But what shall we do, Gertrude? Pa wont give us the money."

"We must have the ball dresses, that's certain," said Gertrude, emphatically. "Why I wouldn't miss going for the world, especially since Miss Stubbins was so cut up at the last ball, because my dress was more elegant than her's, and said she'd eclipse me next time, if it cost her her life. Who's she but a tavern-keeper's daughter? And to talk of eclipsing me!" And the accomplished Miss Gertrude Hardamer curled her lip disdainfully.

"But if Pa won't let us have the money, how are we to get the dresses?" asked Geneva.

"Why, go and buy them at Martin & Morrison's, and not say any thing about it. The bill won't be sent in for three or four months."

"I shouldn't, exactly, like to do that," said Geneva.

"Nonsense! haven't we been in the habit of making bills there? But what will you do?"

"That's what I can't say," replied Geneva, "I must go to this ball, and I haven't any thing fit to be seen in. I want to make a dash at Mr. Appleton, the merchant, and if I don't get a new ball dress, I shall stand no chance."

"A new and splendid dress, something a little ahead of any thing there," urged Gertrude, "will attract a host of admirers, and he will come in at once in fear of a rival. You will then be off of Pa's hands, and can pay the bill yourself, before he comes to know any thing about it. And even, if that should not be convenient, after you are married, he wont, of course, care any thing about it, especially as the new dress will have secured so fine a fellow as Mr. Appleton for a husband."

"That's a new view of the case altogether," said Geneva, brightening up. "And I don't see how we can get along any other way. Pa's determined, that's certain."

Evil counsel prevailed, and Geneva joined her sister in the proposed plan of operations. On the next day they called at Martin & Morrison's, and there discovered a piece of rich, embroidered, blossom-colored satin, and some beautiful figured blonde veils.

"These 'll be grand!" whispered Gertrude to her sister. "This blonde over the blossom-colored satin, will make the most splendid dresses that can be imagined."

"Shall we get them both alike?" said Geneva.

"Of course; we'll attract the more attention," responded Gertrude.

"Shall I cut this piece of satin for you, ladies?" said the polite salesman. "It's the most beautiful thing in town. No other store in the city has the same pattern. Mr. Martin could only get one piece in New York; all the rest of the case having been sold to the retail trade of that city."—At the same time holding the piece of satin so as to let the light fall upon it to bring out clearly the rich embroidery.

"It is beautiful!" exclaimed Gertrude, lost in admiration.

"Beautiful!" responded Geneva.

"How much will you have, ladies?" urged the salesman.

"Shall we take it, Geneva," whispered Gertrude.

"Of course," replied the sister.

"Then we'll take thirty yards, sir," replied Gertrude, not once thinking, or indeed, caring for the price, which was five dollars a yard.

"Will you take some of this blonde?" continued the salesman, after he had measured off the thirty yards of satin.

"How many do you think it will take?" said Gertrude, turning to her sister.

"One for the body—two for the sleeves, and four for the skirt—seven for each. How many

of this pattern have you?" she said, addressing the clerk.

"About fourteen," replied that accommodating gentleman, who had overheard her enumeration.

"Then we'll take them," said Gertrude.

"Nothing else this morning, ladies?"

"Nothing more to-day. We shall want something else, and will call in during the week. Please send the satin and blonde veils to Mrs. Sartain's, in Liberty street, and charge the bill to Mr. Hardamer."

"Certainly, Miss," responded the polite salesman, bowing low, and the young ladies departed.

"How much did you sell them, John?" asked Mr. Morrison, coming forward.

"Let me see," said the clerk—"Thirty yards of blossom-colored, embroidered satin, at five dollars, is one hundred and fifty; and fourteen figured blonde veils at four dollars a piece, is fifty-six dollars. Two hundred and six dollars, sir. Pretty good sale that!" added the clerk, smiling with an air of self-satisfaction at having done so good a half-hour's work.

"Yes, I suppose it is, John. But I'm afraid them extravagant daughters of old Hardamer will ruin as honest a man as ever lived. I wonder how he can be so weak as to allow them, now he is in trouble, to add so much to it. I shall hate to send in the bill."

"That's his look out, not our's, you know," replied the clerk, laughing. "It's our business to sell goods."

"That's very true," responded Mr. Morrison; and he turned to his desk to make the charge.

Neither of the young ladies felt perfectly satisfied with what they were doing; but they had bought the satin and blonde, and it had passed into the dress-maker's hands. There was now no retreating, even if they had wished to do so. But of this they had no idea, uncomfortable as they felt about it. They had never before so wilfully and directly contravened a positive command of their father's, and they could not, of course, feel very easy in mind. But none of this uneasiness arose from a sorrow for disobedience—it had reference, only, to the consequences of disobedience, when it became known.

On the night of the assembly, they dressed themselves in ball dresses used on a former occasion, and then rode off with the young men who had called for them, to Mrs. Sartain's, and there had themselves arrayed by that skillful lady's own hands in their splendid dresses.

"The most beautiful thing I ever saw!" said Mrs. Sartain, glancing with a skillful and practised eye at Gertrude's dress, which she had just finished arranging on that young lady's person. "I have made several for the ball; but they won't bear a comparison with this."

"I am sure of that," responded Gertrude, with a lively emotion of pleasure.

And certainly, they were splendid dresses; and if the figures they had been made to fit, had only been graceful and well proportioned, Gertrude and Geneva would have looked like queens.

Proudly did they glide, on that evening, through the dance, their beautiful dresses the admiration of some—the envy of many. Numerous were the beaux who crowded around them, and the hours flew by with almost the velocity of minutes.

Among the company were two young men, Mr. Appleton, who had recently opened a dry goods' store, and Mr. Carson, his friend, in the same business. These young men, who had been for some time endeavoring to make up their minds to offer proposals to the two girls, accompanied them to the ball this evening, and at its termination, attended them home.

"Well, how were you pleased, Carson?" said his friend, as they left the door of Mr. Hardamer, on bidding the girls good night.

"Humph!" responded that individual. "I think there was more froth than substance, there."

"So do I. These gatherings were never much to my taste, any how."

"I've made up my mind," said Carson, "to back out."

"Ay, indeed! why what's the matter? I thought you were particularly pleased with Gertrude."

"Well, I must confess that I did feel a little inclined, as you know," replied Carson, "but the fact is, Appleton, I've seen a little too strong an exhibition of extravagance to-night. Gertrude was dressed splendidly, but rather too much so for a shoemaker's daughter, especially now that her father's affairs are in so embarrassed a condition, through his heavy engagements for Mr. —. I tried to think that she looked elegant, but every time she came near Miss Wilmer, with her neat, plain white dress, innocent face, and graceful elastic form, I could not but feel that her only merit, like birds in gay plumage, lay in gaudy externala. I feel sick and disappointed."

"Pretty much the same kind of thoughts passed through my mind," said Appleton, "in reference to Geneva. Why, she'd ruin any man with her extravagant ideas! I must take counsel of prudence and relinquish my visits. I'd be a fool to put my neck into a halter with my eyes wide open."

This conference confirmed in each a half-formed resolution to look somewhere else for a wife.

The heads of our young ladies were too nearly turned to be able to think rationally about any thing except the ball for a week after. Their splendid dresses were, of course, seen by their mother, who passed a slight censure upon them, and concealed the matter. As day after day, and week after week passed away, the wonder of the girls increased more and more,

at the prolonged absence of their two particular beaux; and at the few and far between visits which they received from other young gentlemen. The truth was, the real condition of their father's affairs was better known to every body than to themselves; and there were few at the ball who did not feel something like contempt towards young ladies who could be guilty of making so unnecessary a show, when prudence, and every other consideration, should have prompted them to have made an appearance better suited to their real condition and standing. They were, now, further from making the desired matrimonial haven than ever.

Having once passed the Rubicon, in consenting to run up a large bill in opposition to their father's implied commands, they were tempted to increase that bill from time to time, in the purchase of costly shawls, fine dresses, and the various et cetera of a woman's wardrobe, until the gentlemanly owners of the store felt it necessary to hint to them that their bill had already reached the round sum of five hundred dollars. Surprised and alarmed at this, they stopped short, and now had added to their other causes of trouble, the dread of the day when their father should receive this bill, the result of only three months' extravagance in dress.

In the mean time, Genevieve found the good seeds implanted in her mind through the agency of Anne Earnest, gradually striking their roots deeper, and shooting up into tender and green leaves. Her character was undergoing a thorough change—silent, gradual, and sure. Acting constantly from a sense of duty, she always found enough in her father's house to give diligent activity to both mind and body, and thus was she kept in a state far above the distressing despondency which would otherwise have robbed her of all internal peace. Her father perceived, and her mother and sisters felt the change without acknowledging it. The former began to have different and kinder feelings towards her; but the latter felt that she had disgraced them by her imprudent marriage; and all desertion of beaux, or failure of false calculations on different young men, Gertrude and Genevra charged upon her as the cause.

So far as her husband was concerned, Genevieve grew more and more desirous every day to hear from him and to see him. Her own views and feelings being now thoroughly changed, she cherished in her mind the hope of winning him to regard her from other motives than the mere hope of riches. His desertion of her was a cruel one; and his continued silence she felt to be still more cruel; but, being bound to him as his wife, she felt it to be her duty, as a wife, to do all in her power to interest his affections, if he should ever return to her—an event for which she ceased not to hope. Under all the circumstances, her condition was one of painful trial; but, where there is the effort to do right and to feel right, the mind will never sink into distressing despondency. Strange as some

may think it, her's was the most peaceful mind in her father's house.

CHAPTER X.

A FAILURE IN BUSINESS.

"INDEED, Mr. Centum, you must renew this note for me. When I merged all my notes into one, and increased the amount to twenty-five hundred dollars, you gave your positive promise, that you would continue to renew it, so long as the discount was regularly paid. You know that you have ample security."

"Do you think I could go on in that way forever! You have a strange idea of business!" said Mr. Centum, in an irritated manner.

"But, Mr. Centum," urged Mr. Hardamer, "it is only three months since I made the note, and I have paid you your own price upon every renewal. I've never complained of the discount, though it has been large."

"Well, I can't help that, Mr. Hardamer. I've other use for my money, just now, and this must be paid to-day."

"It is impossible!"

"It must be done," said the broker, angrily.

"But you know it is perfectly safe; and what is the use of your driving me to ruin. I cannot possibly pay the money to-day—it is as much as I can do to raise the interest."

"I don't know that it is so safe," replied Mr. Centum, doubtfully. "Property is beginning to fall. Besides, you are too extravagant in your family. Morrison told me yesterday, that your daughters' dry goods' bill for the last three months was over five hundred dollars."

"He didn't tell the truth!" said Hardamer, quickly, and with a good deal of irritation in his manner.

"Well, I never caught him in a falsehood," replied the broker, calmly. "But that is neither here nor there. I cannot renew this note any longer. It *must* be paid to-day!"

"It cannot!" said Hardamer, despondingly.

"So much for befriending you!" replied the broker. "I never yet accommodated a man in trouble, that he didn't disappoint me. Do you suppose, when I loan my money for a certain time, that I do not expect to get it when that time expires! If I find it convenient to renew, why, it's all well enough. But if I don't, nobody has a right to complain. Whenever I want my money, it is my rule to get it. It's only my own that I ask for."

"But, surely, Mr. Centum, humanity would prompt you to make a small sacrifice in a case like mine. You know my situation as well as I do, and know that it is impossible for me to take up this note. I will pay almost any price for the money."

"It's no use for you to talk, Mr. Hardamer. You will be no more able to pay me six months

from now, than you are to-day," said the broker.

"But I am not able to pay you to-day, as far as ready money is concerned."

"That's your look out," replied Mr. Centum, showing his teeth. "You are aware that I have my remedy."

"But you cannot, certainly, find it in your heart to break me up with a large family upon my hands."

"Pooh! what's that my business? I've got my own affairs to attend to, not yours. When a man borrows money, he ought to pay it, and have no to do about it."

"You wont have the note protested, Mr. Centum, will you?" urged Hardamer, in a supplicating tone.

"Wont I!" said Centum, with an angry grin—"wait till three o'clock and see! I don't do my business by halves, and never did."

"In pity, spare me!" said Hardamer, in a voice of agony, driven almost to desperation at the thought of a failure in business.

"I've got no time to fool with you, Mr. Hardamer! Pay that note, or it will be protested, and the mortgage foreclosed to-morrow!" replied the broker, in a loud, angry voice, and abruptly left his office.

The evil day had at last fallen upon him, and there was no hope for poor Hardamer. In the last three months he had paid more than seven hundred dollars in exorbitant discounts to Centum; and that individual, having played with him as long as he thought it prudent, now determined to bring matters to a crisis. His security, it is true, was ample, but there had been a slight decline in the value of property, and he had no idea of running the slightest risk. More than half of the twenty-five hundred dollars due him, he had received in interest, during nine months, from Hardamer, who, in his eagerness to get money, had not hesitated to comply with the money lender's most unrighteous demands. In a state of mind not easily imagined, did Hardamer wait until the town clock rung out, loud and clear, the hour of three. Every stroke of the bell fell upon his ear with a solemn, funeral sound. But after the last ringing reverberation had died on the air, he breathed more freely, and sat himself down to wait in a state of forced calmness, the arrival of the notary. In the course of half an hour, that individual came tripping in, and, with a most unconcerned and unsympathising face, asked for payment of the note.

"I have no money," said Hardamer, mechanically.

The notary threw down a protest upon the counter, and hurried away, while Hardamer lifted the fearful document, and read it over, with strange composure.

It takes but a short time to wind up an honest debtor. Every thing was given up by Hardamer, into the hands of a Trustee, and the business brought to a settlement, as speedily as

possible. His house was sold, and brought but three thousand five hundred dollars, which, with his good book accounts, paid off the whole of his indebtedness to every body. Among the bills brought in was that of Martin & Morrison, for dry goods, amounting to five hundred dollars. It was paid of course.

The business had proceeded as usual, for the two months during which it was in the course of settlement, under the superintendence of Hardamer. All of his stock of leather, and some of the manufactured work was left in his possession, with about five hundred dollars. This constituted his whole capital, at the age of fifty-five, with which again to start in the world. His dwelling and shop, no longer his own, could not now be occupied, unless at a rent of six hundred dollars a year. This he was not able to pay, and he, therefore, looked out for a small dwelling, and for a shop separated from it, in some neighborhood where rents were lower.

A small dwelling-house in Vulcan alley was advertised, and upon ascertaining the rent to be one hundred and twenty dollars a year, he engaged it, without consulting any one of his family.

"What do you think," said Genevra, coming up from the breakfast room, where she had learned from her mother, that her father had engaged a new house. "Pa's gone and rented a little bit of a pigeon-box up in Vulcan alley, and is going to move away from here."

"It ain't possible!" exclaimed Gertrude, jumping up from the piano, at which she still continued to spend hours every day.

"It is possible, though!" said Genevra, bursting into tears.

"Well, I'll not go there! I'll die first!" said Gertrude, stamping upon the floor. "Pa's got no kind of spirit or consideration! Does he think we're agoing to be cramped down in that narrow hole among draymen and niggers?"

"You are wrong, Gertrude," said Genevieve, mildly. "Pa's in great trouble. He is now old, with a large family upon his hands, and all of his property is gone."

"He was a fool for giving it up; that's all I've got to say!" responded Gertrude, passionately. "No man is justified in robbing his family in that way!"

"Gertrude," said Genevieve, firmly, "you must not talk in that way about Pa. He has always been too indulgent to us, and now that he is old and in trouble, we ought to feel for him, and try to help him all we can."

"Nobody asked for your advice, Miss, so just shut up, will you!" replied Gertrude in a loud and angry voice.

"I spoke in vindication of father," Genevieve answered, mildly, but still firmly. "Say what you please to me, about myself, and I will be silent; but I cannot hear him spoken of unkindly, and remain silent."

"I wonder how long it is since you became

so dutiful," said Genevra, with a sneer. "You've forgotten the hopeful young gentleman you ran off with last summer, haven't you?"

"Silence!" said Hardamer, in a loud angry voice, coming suddenly into the room from the passage, where he had heard the rebuke of Genevieve, and the cutting remark of Genevra.

"Do you know, huzzy! who you are talking to, or what you are talking about!" he continued, much excited. "What is the meaning of this? How dare you talk to your sister thus. Your sister, who is better, in every sense of the word than a dozen such proud, lazy, extravagant trollops as you are. Has she ever run me in debt like this, ha?"—exhibiting Martin & Morrison's bill of five hundred dollars. "I'll turn you out of the house in a minute, if I hear another unkind word from you to your sister. Why don't you go to work as she does, instead of abusing her, and try to help me a little in supporting you. I'll sell that piano, my lady!" he continued, turning to Gertrude, who still remained on the piano stool, and notwithstanding her father's anger, kept running her fingers over the keys in a careless, indifferent manner. "You'd better be mending stockings, a great sight!"

"Not exactly!" responded the young lady, drawing her lips together, and tossing her head quite significantly, at the same time continuing to let finger after finger fall upon the keys, in slow succession.

For a moment the father's feelings were roused to a degree that scarcely left him any control of himself; but, by a strong effort, he restrained the inclination he felt to box the young lady's ears, and turning upon his heel, went down stairs.

"Humph! sell the piano, indeed!" said Gertrude, as soon as her father was out of hearing. "I should like to see him try that trick. I reckon he'd find the house too hot to hold us all."

"Indeed, indeed, Gertrude!" said Genevieve, "It is very wrong for you to speak in that way. I cannot bear it."

"None of your gabble, Miss!" responded Gertrude, turning up her nose with a sneer.

"She's got Pa on her side, now, and she thinks she is somebody," said Genevra. "But she needn't put her jaw in where I'm concerned, I can tell her! she only sews here from morning 'till night to curry favor with him."

"But how do you know, Genevra, that he's taken a house in Vulcan alley?" said Gertrude, interrupting her.

"Why, I heard him tell Ma so, just now."

"And what did she say to it?"

"Why, she said it wouldn't do at all!"

"Well, and what reply did he make to that?"

"He said it would do, and it *should* do. That he was going to take matters and things into his own hands now, and have them his own way."

"Hasn't he said that a hundred times," said Gertrude, with an incredulous toss of the head.

"It's no use for him to talk; we're not going to live in that dirty hole, no how at all. Why I'll die before I'll go there!"

In about fifteen minutes after the father turned abruptly from the room, and while Gertrude and Genevra were still in a state of great excitement, he re-entered, accompanied by a well-known piano-forte maker.

"This is the instrument, Mr. H——. But you know all about it. What do you think you can give me in cash for it?"

The girls started, in utter astonishment; but a dark and threatening look from their father, kept them silent; for there were times when they saw, in his countenance, that which they dared not oppose.

Mr. H——, examined the piano all round, struck the keys, and after having satisfied himself, said—

"I can allow you something in the neighborhood of three hundred dollars."

"Very well. You can take it at that. I must learn my girls to play on some other instrument now. Every dog must have his day, and we have had ours."

"It's a pity to rob the young ladies of this sweet toned instrument," said Mr. H——, glancing at Gertrude and Genevra, whose countenances exhibited dismay and consternation. To counteract this, Hardamer cast on them a menacing look, and they were silent.

"A dutiful and affectionate daughter," he replied, "could take no pleasure in idling her time at the piano, while her old father was toiling from morning until night to support her; particularly, if by her industry she could lighten his burdens."

"True, sir, true," responded Mr. H——.

"Duty first, pleasure afterwards. But when do you wish me to take the instrument away?"

"At once, sir. Please send your men around immediately, and remove it. I wish to have the money as soon as I can lay my hands upon it."

"It shall be done," said Mr. H——, bowing, and in half an hour the piano was gone.

The determined air with which all this was done, utterly confounded the young ladies. They could not understand it at all. And they were not only astonished, but in a great degree dispirited. They could not but feel how vain would have been opposition in the case of the piano; and a painful consciousness of weakness and inability to oppose their father came over them, and humbled their determined spirits.

"We're not going to live in Vulcan alley, Ma, are we?" asked Gertrude, anxiously, that evening, after the father had retired to the shop.

"Yes, we are, though. Your father has taken a house, and will not be persuaded to give it up. I don't know what to do, he's in such a strange humor."

"It was cruel to take our piano," said Genevra, bursting into tears for the twentieth time since the instrument was taken away. "What

shall I do with myself? I feel disgraced, too, for every body of any standing has a piano."

"You'll find enough to do, I expect, without playing on the piano," replied her mother.

"What do you mean, Ma?" asked Gertrude, quickly.

"I mean, that you've all got to go to work and help to support the family," said Mrs. Har-damer. "Your father says so, and he is in no humor to be crossed."

"Never! I'll die first!" responded that young lady, indignantly.

"We'll see about that," said her mother, calmly. "There's always a way to do a thing. I don't, myself, see that there is any great harm in a young lady's employing her time usefully. I had to work when I was a girl, and I don't see that you are any better than I am. Your father has to work hard, and will have to work harder still to get bread for us all, and you are no better than he is."

"I'll die first!" broke in the pertinacious Gertrude, sobbing.

"I'm sure I cannot see that it is such a disgrace to work," said Genevieve, looking up from the garment upon which she was sewing. "Anne Earnest does not think it a disgrace to work, and she—"

"Do you *dare* to even me with Anne Earnest?" exclaimed Gertrude, her eyes flashing fire as she spoke.

"I have no wish to do so, Gertrude, if it is offensive to you," replied her sister. "I was only going to say, that Mrs. Webster esteems her as her own daughter, and yet Anne sews for her all the while; and more, Mr. Illerton is going to marry her next week."

"How do you know that?" asked Gertrude, in astonishment, springing to her feet.

"Why, I had it from her own lips, yesterday, in Mrs. Webster's presence. And more than that, Mrs. Webster says that all of Mr. Illerton's friends in Virginia approve the match, and that his father, mother, and sisters are to be here at the wedding."

"I don't believe a word of it!" said Genevieve. "Mr. Illerton is not going to marry a poor hired girl whom nobody knows. And I'd like to know, any how, where you saw Mrs. Webster when she told you all this?"

"I heard it at Mrs. Webster's own house," replied Genevieve, mildly.

"And pray what were you doing there?" asked Gertrude, in surprise.

"I go there every week to see Anne," said Genevieve. "And Mrs. Webster is very kind and lady-like in her manner towards me. She has often told me how much she loves Anne, and says that she feels as near to her as if she were her own child. 'I never saw a girl of such pure principles, and such an innocent heart. Mr. Illerton, who is a son of my old and dearest friend, has indeed found a treasure, were the very words she used to me one day last week when we were alone. And yet, Anne

is busy all the while, and what is more; Mrs. Webster sits and sews with her by the hour; and we all know that she moves in the very first circle in the city. So you see, Gertrude, that it is not thought disgraceful to work, by the first ladies in town."

This was too much for the girls, and they hung their heads in silence. Two days after, this interesting family underwent the process of removing into a small two-story house in Vulcan alley. It had a large back building, which afforded, with the front chambers and garret, room for the whole family. It was a house without a passage. But the two neat parlors below were thrown into one by folding-doors.

Notwithstanding her determination to die first, Gertrude removed with the rest; and, in a sad state of mind, in which Genevieve fully sympathized with her, settled herself down, hopeless of ever receiving a beau again that was any body. In all the care, bustle and confusion of moving, Genevieve was prompt, active and thoughtful, while Gertrude and Genevieve were to the family as the fifth wheel to a carriage, an incumbrance. The eyes of the father and mother, now fairly opened to the true character of their three oldest children, saw all this, and their affectionate consideration for Genevieve was greatly increased. Especially did her father feel his heart warming towards her; for, in the change of circumstances that had passed upon them, while the other two, and even his wife and younger children, bore countenances of distress, that robbed him of all quiet of mind, Genevieve was ever active and cheerful. Particularly was she careful for his comfort. Every little attention that could in any way add to it, was promptly given, and with an evidence of affectionate regard that softened the stern and harsh features of his character, and made him often feel towards her a degree of tenderness that his heart had but rarely known.

"You are a good girl, Genevieve," he said to her a few days after they had moved, with a heartiness of tone, and a smile that warmed the heart of his child. He had just discovered some little attention, which her thoughtful regard had been prompt in executing, and its character had affected him. He had never before expressed to her his consciousness of her dutiful regard, and these few words, which seemed to gush forth spontaneously, were to her heart a rich reward. Ever since her unfortunate marriage, she had felt alone, forsaken and despised, even in her father's house, and only in the steady performance of duty she had found peace for her troubled spirit. True, he had the week before, spoken well of her, in rebuking her sisters, but this was done in a moment of angry excitement. Now there was no mistaking the warmth of his feelings. She looked up into his face with eyes instantly suffused, and with an expression of subdued but

heartfelt delight upon her countenance. She could not utter a word in reply, but he understood and felt the language of her face. Touching his lips to her forehead, an act of affection she had not received for years, he hastened away, his own heart overcome with rising emotions.

The gush of tears that relieved the oppressed feelings of Genevieve, were the most joyful tears that had ever fallen from her eyes.

CHAPTER XI.

SOME INDICATION OF A CHANGE.

"Is there any one whom you would like to invite, Anne?" said Mrs. Webster.

"You know, madam," said Anne Earnest, in reply, "that I have few or no friends beyond this house; and yet, there is one whom I should like to see here, if her presence would be agreeable to you."

"And who is that, Anne?"

"It is Mrs. Anderson. You have seen her here frequently, and I have often heard you speak kindly of her."

"I will invite her; and she shall be truly welcome," said Mrs. Webster. "The more I see of her, the more she pleases me. She seems changing fast; and changing by the constant activity of good principles. Afflicting circumstances have done much for her. Would you like to have her sisters invited?"

"No, madam. Such a distinction would only inflame their false pride. Mrs. Anderson will only find encouragement from it, and it will strengthen her in the performance of her duties. I feel much interested in her, for she is struggling alone with many oppositions, without and within. Her sisters despise her, and treat her with all manner of unkindness. An invitation from you may alter their estimation of her real character, and change their conduct towards her."

"I like your suggestion very much, Anne," replied Mrs. Webster. "There are few precepts more binding upon us than that which teaches us to help those who are struggling against their evils. Her father has become much reduced of late, I understand?"

"He is now," said Anne, "reduced so low as to leave his family entirely dependant upon his daily efforts for a subsistence. All of his property is gone. But this, in my view, is not his only misfortune. Except in Mrs. Anderson, I doubt if he has an individual in his family, who feels for him any true sympathy."

"Than that, Anne, I should think there could be few greater misfortunes."

"And yet, Mrs. Webster, it is one consequent upon his own neglect of the true interests of his family. Like too many others, he al-

lowed his daughters to grow up in idleness, and in the vain pursuit of pleasure in dress and dissipation. Instead of teaching them, that only while in the performance of uses to others are we in the right sphere of action, they were left to draw the too prevailing conclusion, that others were to minister to their pleasures. Indulged in every thing, is it any wonder that, in the end, an inordinate selfish desire should be formed, that could not in any degree sympathize with another, especially, when their own sources of false pleasure were suddenly cut off? At present, owing to the darkness of their internal perceptions, through selfishness, they are unable to look upon their father's misfortunes in any other light than as affecting themselves; and can even censure him for mismanagement in his business, and consequent injustice to them."

"Surely," said Mrs. Webster, in surprise, "you must be mistaken in supposing them so utterly lost to every genuine impulse of true feeling."

"I wish, for their own, and for their father's sake, it were only an imaginary conclusion," replied Anne. "I have too often heard them express themselves in reference to their father, in a way that justifies my remark, even if I did not now know, as I do, that they feel and speak as I have intimated."

"How true is it," remarked Mrs. Webster, "that a wrong beginning, if not corrected, makes an evil ending. But, Anne, to change the subject; I hope you and Mr. Illerton have concluded to remain here after your marriage. I cannot part with you, at least for a time."

"I don't know what his intentions are, Mrs. Webster," replied Anne, "for we have not conversed upon the subject. But, as far as I am concerned, nothing would gratify me more than to remain with you. We shall spend a few weeks, you know, in Virginia, with Mr. Illerton's family, and when we return we shall, of course, be glad to find our home here, until other arrangements can be made."

"Look upon it, my dear child, as your own home, as much as if it were your mother's house," said Mrs. Webster, in a voice that slightly trembled. "And, after your husband, let me claim the next place in your affections."

"Never, while I live, my dear madam," replied Anne, with emotion, "can I forget your kindness and your love. In my heart, your place is next to that of my own dear mother."

"No higher place can I desire to hold, Anne. The mother, who, so steadily, under privations and toil, continued to sow the seeds, and water the tender plants of good principles in your mind, should ever be first in your affections."

"O, Mrs. Webster, she was a woman pure in heart, and upright in intention! I wish you had known her." Anne's voice was broken with emotion.

"We would have been friends, Anne, had we known each other truly. But, it was of the

Providence of the Lord that this should not occur."

"It was, Mrs. Webster, and that Providence is wise and good."

"I need hardly tell you, my dear child, that only in such an acknowledgment, is there true happiness to be found. This lesson you have long since learned."

"Not so perfectly," replied Anne, "but that it will bear a frequent repetition. We are too much inclined to expect things to occur in a certain way pleasing to our selfish desires, and when, in the wisdom of Providence, they take a contrary direction, for a time our disappointed selfish feelings obscure our affection for real good, and bring inward distrust and dissatisfaction. At such times, how merciful is the Lord to us, in not suffering this excitement of evil to destroy the good that has been formed within us; but, in providing in the interiors of the mind, a place for it to retire and rest in safety, until the evil brought out into activity is subdued, when it again appears and rules in our affections. How profoundly do I feel, at times, Mrs. Webster, that without Him, who is the Alpha and the Omega, I am nothing!"

"And we are nothing," said Mrs. Webster, "apart from Him. All the good that is in us is from the Lord. Every good affection, and every good thought that we have, are from Him, and we should never forget, that to give to ourselves the praise for a good act, is to take away from him what is justly his due, and therefore indulging in spiritual robbery. It is well to fix in our minds a true understanding of things, and to call them by their right names. By so doing, we shall be less likely to run into error through ignorance, and thus be made to feel painfully an evil before perceiving it."

A servant coming in at the moment, interrupted the conversation, and, Mrs. Webster leaving the room in a few minutes, Anne was left alone with her own pleasant thoughts. Illerton had not been long in making an impression upon her heart, and when he asked for her hand, she yielded it without hesitation, for Mrs. Webster had borne testimony, from long acquaintance, to his pure principles.

On the day succeeding that on which the conversation just alluded to occurred between Mrs. Webster and Anne, a servant knocked at the door of Mr. Hardamer's dwelling, in Vulcan alley, or New Church street, as it is now called. He handed in a note directed to Mrs. Anderson. Gertrude and Geneva were alone in the parlor, and one of them received it.

"What is that?" asked Gertrude of her sister.

"It's a note for Genevieve, on gilt-edged note paper."

"Who's it from? Open it, and let us see what is in it," said Gertrude, promptly.

Without hesitation the note was opened, and Geneva read—"Mrs. Webster's compliments to Mrs. Anderson; she will be pleased to have

Mrs. Anderson's company on Thursday evening at seven o'clock."

"Are you sure it's for her?" asked Gertrude, incredulously.

"Certainly! It's for Mrs. Anderson," replied Geneva.

"Maybe it's for some other Mrs. Anderson," said Gertrude. "I think we'd better not show it to her, for if we do, she'll be sure to go and make a fool of herself. I'm certain it can't mean her."

"I don't know but what we had," responded Geneva. "I wonder what's to be done there?"

"Anne is to be married, I suppose, sure enough. Well, there's no accounting for tastes. Who could have dreamed that a man like Illerton would marry such a low-bred creature as Anne Earnest! A pretty figure she'll cut! I'd like to be at the wedding just to see how she would act. I reckon she'll hardly know whether she's on her head or on her heels. Humph! Ain't it too bad!" and Gertrude tossed her head disdainfully.

"If this is the way the thing works," remarked Geneva, "I see no use in trying to be something. A body might just as well take things fair and easy, and trust to its coming out right. If men will prefer such creatures as Anne, where's the use of trying to be genteel? It makes me mad, so it does!"

"I don't reckon he's much, any how," said Gertrude, "I always thought there was something low lived about him. He wants to make a slave of his wife, I suppose, and has been attracted to Anne, because she can work. If he'd married me, I'd have shown him another story, the mean fellow!"

"But what shall we do with this note!" asked Geneva, interrupting Gertrude.

"Why, burn it up. I'd never let her see it," replied Gertrude, a good deal excited.

"But, maybe she'll find it out."

"Well, suppose she does? Who cares? I'm sure I don't. She's not going to crow over me in this way, I know!"

Acting out their evil intention, the sisters concealed the note in one of their drawers, intending to burn it on the first opportunity. It so happened that Genevieve had occasion to go to this very drawer about an hour after, when her eye fell upon the crumpled note, bearing her own address. She took it up and read it, and understood too well why it had not reached her. Replacing it, she determined in her own mind not to let them know that she had seen it, but to go to Mrs. Webster's in accordance with the invitation. On Thursday she told her mother that she had been invited to see Anne married, and in the afternoon prepared to go. Gertrude and Geneva could not, of course, forget, that this was the evening named in the invitation, and they were not a little surprised to perceive that their sister was making unusual preparations to go out.

"Where are you going, Genevieve?" asked

Genevra, whose curiosity exceeded her indisposition to question her sister.

"I am going to Anne Earnest's wedding," she replied, quietly.

"Not without an invitation, certainly," said Genevra, thrown off of her guard.

"Of course not, Genevra," replied her sister.

"But I never saw your invitation! When did you receive it?" said Genevra, with unguarded warmth.

This declaration pained Genevieve exceedingly, and, after a few moments reflection, she replied, in a serious tone:—

"I am grieved, exceedingly, Genevra, that you are so unjust to yourself as to have tried to do me a wrong, and then to say what is untrue about it, without having been asked a question. Surely you ought to have been content with concealing my note of invitation, and not have added to your wrong action, by a voluntary denial of what you had done. No one but yourself can suffer by this. You see it has done me no harm. I cannot understand, Genevra, why you should so perseveringly try to wound my feelings, and not even content with that, to endeavor to do me a greater wrong. Surely, your own heart must tell you, that I have enough of suffering, without your adding a single pang. I have not mentioned what you have done to any one, and do not intend mentioning it. But let me entreat of you, as you value your peace of mind, to give way no longer to the unkind feelings you entertain towards me; I have given you no cause for them, and you can only entertain them to your injury."

Genevra, thus suddenly and unexpectedly convicted of a wrong action, was so confounded as to be unable to utter a word. She hung her head in silence. For the first time in her life, she stood consciously rebuked before her sister, and so humbled that she knew not what to say. Perceiving, instinctively, her true state of mind, Genevieve took her hand, and continued, in a low, tremulous tone:—

"My dear sister, you are not happy; nor can you tell when you were happy. In vain will you look abroad for the dear desire of your heart; it cannot thus be found, though you search for a whole life-time. Your happiness must come from within. Your own heart, Genevra, must be rightly tuned, or it will never give forth a pleasant sound. For a long, long time you have indulged in selfish desires. Your world has been a little circle, and yourself the centre. But, have you found contentment? Your trembling hand—that tear on your cheek, tell me no!"

"O, sister, I am so unhappy!" sobbed out the poor girl leaning her head upon the shoulder of Genevieve in sudden abandonment of feeling.

"And yet you need not be so, my dear sister," said Genevieve, in a voice of tender concern, drawing at the same time an arm around the waist of Genevra. "If your search after happiness has not been successful, it is because you

have not discovered its true source. But there is happiness, and, it is for you, if you will only accept of it. Suffer me to direct your mind aright in this matter. Hitherto you have cared only to gratify yourself; you have thought not of others as having claims upon you. But the attainment of every selfish desire has only created new desires, too many of which you have found it impossible to realize. And thus, every time your wishes have been gratified, you have had new causes of discontent. If you would be happy, these exclusively selfish desires must be laid aside, and you must begin to consider others with feelings of kindness. You must begin to think, that, as a member of society, there are duties which you are required to perform, and that if you neglect these duties, some one, or many, must suffer. The word *duty* may seem to you harsh and repulsive. But the more you realize, by practice, its true meaning, the more pleasant will be its sound to your ear. And, first of all, your duties should commence at home. Consider, for a moment, our father—declining in years, ruined in business, and burdened with a large family. Can you do nothing as his daughter, to lighten his toil? Are there no little attentions which you can render, that will make him feel his home to be a pleasant place, and cause him to think of his Genevra with a glow of heart-felt satisfaction? If nothing more, you can, at least, in his presence, *seem* to be cheerful, and not, by a distressed countenance, make him ever feel that his children are discontented with the best he can do for them. Forget yourself in this matter, and consider him. He has need, as your father, of all your affectionate consideration. And think, if there is nothing that you can do, to make your mother's daily labors less fatiguing. Here are three of us—surely Ma need not be the servant of us all! Rather, let us lighten her burdens by taking them upon ourselves, and making her feel that we have for her a tender filial regard. If each of us were to try her best to make the others happy, what a pleasant family we would make! Can you not see, my dear sister, that in so doing you would be far happier, than you have ever been?"

"I do! I do!" responded Genevra, sobbing.

"Then resolve, my sister, that you will try to be more considerate of others; and that, instead of caring only for yourself, you will endeavor to add to the happiness of those around you. Your reward will be a peace far deeper and purer than any that has ever yet filled your heart."

"O Genevieve, how much I have wronged you!" said Genevra, lifting her head, and looking into her sister's face with an expression of deep penitence. "And yet, you have been so patient!—so kind!"

"Be not pained, Genevra, on this account. Let us be hereafter, as sisters," responded Genevieve, pressing her lips to the burning cheek of the weeping girl.

"I shall never be able to lift my head again.

O, I have been so thoughtless! so wicked!" continued Genevra. "How could I have been so selfish! I never once thought that others required a performance of my duties. How shall I ever atone for my past wrongs!"

"Let good resolutions, deeply grounded, take the place of afflicting thoughts, and all will be well," said Genevieve, encouragingly.

"O, I shall never be as I have been again," she said.

"I trust not, Genevra," replied her sister. "But you will have a hard battle to fight. Your evils are not subdued—they have only retired; and will again show themselves, and enter into combat with the good resolutions formed in your mind. Then will come the time when it will require all your strength and courage to fight against the active evils of your heart, grown powerful by long indulgence. But if you look up to Him for aid, whose ear is ever open, he will help you, and even conquer for you all your enemies. In your own strength, remember, my dear sister, that you can do nothing—trusting in the Lord, no evil can subdue you."

"I will make the effort," replied Genevra, with a serious, but calm countenance.

"In the strength of our Heavenly Father, you will come off more than conqueror," said Genevieve, tenderly.

That evening, after Genevieve had gone to the wedding, her father wanted a clean cravat, as he had a society-meeting to attend.

"Where is Genevieve?" he asked, in a tone that indicated the want of something.

"She has gone out, Pa," said Genevra, rising from her chair, and advancing towards him. "Do you want any thing?"

"Only a cravat," he replied. "But never mind, I can get it."

"Let me get it for you, Pa," she said, going into his chamber, and quickly returning with a white cravat, which she had, already, neatly folded for him.

The father said nothing. But the look which he cast upon his child, was to her a sweet reward.

After he had gone out, instead of folding her hands, as usual, in gloomy idleness, Genevra sat down by her mother, and offered to assist her in sewing.

Gertrude looked up with surprise on hearing Genevra's remark; but when she saw her actually begin to sew on one of her younger sister's frocks, her astonishment broke out into words, and she said sneeringly—

"What's in the wind, now?"

"Nothing," replied Genevra. "Only I begin to think it hardly right to sit in idleness while Ma is at work."

"If she chooses to work her eyes out, that's no reason that I should," said Gertrude in an irritated tone. "You've grown mighty considerate all at once, upon my word! I thought something was out, when you pattered off so

fustily after Pa's cravat. But you got no thanks for your trouble!"

Now this was a pretty severe trial for Genevra, and she found her resentful feelings a good deal excited. But she only replied—

"It was not because I wanted thanks, Gertrude. But Pa wished for a cravat, and Genevieve was away."

"Fiddle-stick on Genevieve! I wish she would stay away!"

"I don't think we ought to feel so unkindly towards her," said Genevra in an earnest tone. "She never interferes with us. We have been very much to blame for our actions towards her, Gertrude."

"You don't say so!" responded Gertrude, with a sneer. "But, in the name of wonder, what has broken loose all at once! You were very fierce, the other day, to hide her invitation, and then to burn it!"

"What invitation?" asked Mrs. Hardamer, with a look of surprise.

"Her invitation to Anne Earnest's wedding, Ma," replied Genevra. "It fell into our hands, and we were so ill-natured as to conceal it from her, and then to destroy it. But before we had burned it, she saw it by accident, and saying nothing about it, prepared herself for the wedding party, and went, as you know, this evening. Surprised at her knowledge of the invitation, I could not help saying something to her, when she convicted me in such mild, but strong terms, of my evil intentions towards her, that I felt rebuked and humbled. She did not get angry and chide me with any warmth of feeling, but pictured to me, so clearly, the wrong I did to myself, as well as to her, that I could not utter a word in reply. I feel sensible that I have acted from very bad motives and feelings. And I have resolved to do better, if I can."

"Well, you are a fool!" exclaimed Gertrude, rising to her feet in utter astonishment. "I believe the whole family are going crazy!"

Genevra made no reply, for something seemed to whisper to her that it could do no good; and although she desired very greatly to make the effort to correct her sister's wrong ideas, yet she contented with this desire, and remained silent.

The great change that had become apparent in Genevieve, could not be without its effect upon her mother. For a long time, it is true, Mrs. Hardamer entertained towards her feelings of unkindness for the disgrace she had brought upon the family by her unhappy marriage; but her uniform mildness of temper, and constant efforts to lighten her mother's burdens, gradually changed her feelings, and she had now begun to feel for her a degree of affection that she could not entertain towards Gertrude and Genevra. The unhappy temper displayed by the two latter, had, for some time past, almost discouraged her, and, as any opposition to them, as far as she was concerned, only brought about discord, and violent exhibitions of anger and

disobedience, she had been driven for quietude, if not peace, to an apparent indifference to their actions. This position of things, was bringing about, for her, by slow but sure changes, a new state of mind. And this state consisted in a better perception of what should really be desired as the end of life.

So sudden and unlooked for a change in Geneva struck her with surprise. But it was a surprise that sent a thrill of delight to her bosom. Up to the angry exclamation of Gertrude, she had remained silent. That Geneva did not respond to it, pleased her greatly, although she could hardly tell why, for she was no close observer of mental operations. Feeling now called upon to say something, she replied to Gertrude:—

"If not disposed to do well yourself, Gertrude, at least suffer others to act in a better way. Geneva is right, and, in continuing as she has begun, she will find her reward in a quiet mind. Let me beg of you, Gertrude," and the tears came into the mother's eyes, "to imitate so good an example."

"Don't preach to me, if you please!" responded Gertrude, angrily, hastily leaving the room, and slamming the door after her.

Mrs. Hardamer took off her spectacles, wiped her eyes, replaced them, and attempted to continue her sewing. But the moisture again accumulated, and threw a mist over every thing. Again she removed her glasses, dried her eyes, and again replaced them. But it was no use, the tears stole out and again blinded her. Placing her arm upon the work-table, and leaning her head upon her hand, she allowed her feelings to take their course. Still plying her needle and seeming not to observe her, Geneva ever and anon turned an earnest look towards her mother, and not without emotion did she perceive tear after tear stealing over her hand and dropping to the floor. Were they tears of joy or tears of sorrow?

CHAPTER XII.

AN UNEXPECTED INTERVIEW.

It was after ten o'clock that night, when Mr. Hardamer came home from the meeting he had attended. His wife was sitting up for him, alone, and as he entered, he could not but observe that her face wore an expression that was new, and somewhat strange, yet by no means painful. She looked him in the eyes so

steadily, as he sat down beside the table at which she was still sewing, and seemed about to speak, yet unable, from some cause, to bring her thoughts out into words, that he said, to break the silence:—

"Has any thing happened?"

There was something in the tone of her husband's voice more tender and subdued than usual, and it had the effect still more to soften her feelings. The tears sprang into her eyes, and he perceived, that, from emotion, she could not trust herself to speak. A new and sudden interest in the happiness of his wife, arose in his bosom, and turning a look of affectionate concern, he said—

"Something weighs upon your mind more than usual. Let me share it with you, whether it be pleasant or painful."

"It is both pleasant and painful, husband," she replied, while the tears that had been ready to gush forth, rolled over her cheeks, in which both years and care had made many deep lines. She bent her face down upon the table, and sobbed aloud, unable longer to restrain her feelings.

Hardamer did not interrupt her, and in a short time her emotion subsided. Raising her head, she looked him again in the face, and said—

"Something has happened to-night that has given me great pleasure. Geneva has changed, suddenly, for the better; and, like her sister Genevieve, seems anxious to do all she can to make things more pleasant and comfortable."

"Indeed!" responded Hardamer, his face brightening up. "Well, I thought a little strange of her to-night, when she volunteered to get my cravat, and seemed so pleased in handing it to me. But what can be the cause of it?"

"Why, so far as I can understand it," replied Mrs. Hardamer, "both Geneva and Gertrude were so ill-natured as to hide away and then destroy a note of invitation for Genevieve to attend a wedding party at Mrs. Webster's. But, it so happened, that Genevieve accidentally saw it before it was destroyed, and without saying a word about it, prepared herself to go, this afternoon. Geneva said something to her, when Genevieve convicted her so unexpectedly of the wrong action, and then, I suppose, talked so kindly to her, that Geneva softened down, and then resolved to do better. I should think it an excellent sign to see her so soon trying to act upon her good resolutions."

"Indeed it is," replied her husband, his mind in a state of pleasing wonder. "Well, after all, I shall begin to think that some good can even come out of trouble. There is no denying that Genevieve has very much changed for the better since her unhappy marriage, and changed, too, in spite of all the neglect and unkindness she has experienced in her own father's house. And now, to find Geneva imitating

her good example, is wonderful indeed!" Mr. Hardamer's voice slightly trembled.

"There came suddenly into my memory to-night," said Mrs. Hardamer, in reply, "while I sat here, these words, 'Sweet are the uses of adversity.' I never seemed to understand them before. But now I begin to see what they mean. I am sure I feel happier to-night, notwithstanding all of our outward reverses, than I ever felt while we were prosperous. I think we have looked too much to the outward things of the world, as desirable, and too little to that state of mind, which, after all, is to constitute our happiness or misery. I mean, to that condition of mind, which makes us contented with the present, and desirous that all around us should feel a like degree of contentment."

Mr. Hardamer listened with pleasure and surprise to the words of his wife. She had never been disposed, through her whole life, to give much attention to other than mere external things, and his surprise was excited at hearing her make a remark that seemed to him so sound, and that involved an idea above what he had thought her capable of conceiving. He knew not, that, so soon as the mind begins to have an affection for goodness, its condition is at once made more healthy, and that it acts with new vigor. Nor had he any idea of spiritual association, whereby, according to the affection of the mind for good or for evil, an individual may be in association with good or evil spirits, who illuminate, or darken his perceptions. Mrs. Hardamer, by suffering the good principles of her mind to become active, came into such an association as helped her to true thoughts, and these she brought out into expression, and thus made them her own.

"Your thoughts have been running in the same channel with mine," replied her husband. "I think, with you, that there is great room for improvement, and I feel a strong disposition to enter upon a change of desires and aims at once. Even for the few minutes that we have been talking, I can perceive a new light breaking in upon my mind, and it reveals many things that I was not conscious existed there, and which I at once acknowledge to be wrong."

At that moment a carriage was heard to drive up to the door, and, in a minute after, Genevieve entered. It was about eleven o'clock when she came in, and she was surprised at finding her father and mother, who usually retired early, up at so late an hour.

"Did you come home in that carriage?" said her father, with an encouraging smile.

"Yes, sir. Mrs. Webster insisted upon sending me home."

"That was very kind in her," remarked Mrs. Hardamer. "And so I suppose Anne is married?" she added, without the tone of her voice indicating the dislike she had so long entertained.

"Yes, mother, she is married," replied Genevieve, pleased at finding her friend alluded to, without the usual sneer.

"I always thought Anne a good girl," said Mr. Hardamer.

"Indeed, father, she is. I cannot tell you how many good lessons she has taught me. Had it not been for her, I know not how I should have borne up under the trials and troubles of the past year." Genevieve's voice trembled, and she regained the command of her feelings only by a strong effort.

Mrs. Hardamer, self-convicted of having wronged the friendless girl, and of having, ever since, entertained towards her feelings of unkindness, was a good deal moved by Genevieve's words and manner. After a few moments of silence, she said—

"There is always danger of our passing a wrong judgment upon others; and I have, I believe, been guilty of misjudging Anne Earnest. You can say so to her, Genevieve, when you again see her; and if ever I meet her, I will acknowledge it to herself."

Genevieve looked surprised and delighted at this confession.

"Anne has always spoken kindly of you, mother," she said. "I never see her, that she does not ask after you; and she expresses for you a degree of interest that I could hardly have expected her to entertain."

"She is a good girl, I doubt not," said Mr. Hardamer, "and I know she has obtained a good husband. May God bless them!" he added, with feeling, taking up a light, and retiring to his chamber.

On the next morning, while the family were seated at the breakfast table, Gertrude said, with a sneer, at the same time glancing at Genevieve—

"I suppose Anne Earnest didn't know whether she was on her head or her heels, last night."

"Yes, she was as collected, and as easy in her manners, as ever," replied Genevieve, with a smile.

"No doubt!" responded Gertrude, with another sneer, and a toss of the head. "She is just low-minded enough to be free and easy any where."

"Gertrude!" said Mr. Hardamer, looking her steadily, and somewhat sternly in the face. "I cannot permit such remarks in my presence. Anne Earnest, or rather Mrs. Illerton, is every inch a lady, and has found her true level in society. She was not well treated here, because there was no one in this house who could appreciate her real worth, but Genevieve, and she has had less influence in the past year than her real character has called for. Hereafter I shall expect no more such allusions to her, intended only to wound the feelings of your sister."

Surprised at this rebuke, Gertrude glanced at her mother, who, she well knew, had entertained like feelings with herself in regard to Anne. Mrs. Hardamer understood the meaning of this mute appeal, and said—

"Your father is right, Gertrude, and we have all been wrong. Hereafter, let us endeavor to judge more righteous judgment of others."

"You're a —," but the evil-minded girl checked the word as it was forming on her tongue, and, instantly self-convicted of wrong, she arose hastily from the table, and retired to her chamber.

Hardamer and his wife understood too well the thought that was in the mind of their child, and they finished their meal in silence, deeply pained at heart.

About ten o'clock on the same morning, as Mr. Hardamer was busily engaged behind his counter in cutting out work, an elderly man entered, and with an expression of countenance, which he could not but observe to be peculiar, asked if his name was not Hardamer.

"That is my name," he replied, looking into the stranger's face inquiringly.

"And my name is Anderson," said the stranger.

"Anderson!" ejaculated Hardamer, with a sudden start, while a shade of painful feeling settled upon his countenance.

"You have true cause, sir, to be pained at the mention of that name; for, if I am rightly informed, one who bore it, has trifled with the hopes and happiness of your child, and through her, deeply wounded you," said the stranger, in a voice evidently agitated by emotions against the influence of which he was vainly struggling.

"And why do you thus open wounds but half-healed over?" asked Hardamer, with a voice and expression of sternness.

"I would open but to heal more surely," said the stranger, affecting to smile, but it was a feeble smile. "I am the father of the unhappy young man who married your daughter!"

"His father!" exclaimed Hardamer, in surprise. "Then, my dear sir, what news do you bring from one towards whom I cannot be expected to entertain very kind feelings?"

"Good news, I hope, sir," replied old Mr. Anderson. "He is a changed man, and I have good reasons for believing the change to be radical. This change has been in progress for many months, and, from observing it closely, and with all of a parent's scrutinizing and doubting anxiety, I feel sure that it is genuine."

The events of a year had broken down the feelings of Hardamer, and robbed him of much of the control over himself that he had once possessed. The suddenness of this news, as well as its character, and the manner, appearance, and evident emotion of the stranger who stood before him in a new and unexpected re-

lation, all combined to affect him powerfully. He covered his face with his hands, and leaned down upon the counter, evidently struggling to keep fast hold of his self-possession. In a few moments he lifted his head, and exhibited a countenance paler than before, and touched with a tenderer expression. He passed round the counter, and coming in front of Mr. Anderson, took his hand in both of his, and while his lip quivered slightly, and his voice trembled, said—

"We are, it seems, companions in a single sorrow—and it has been deep and painful to both of our hearts. Let us be friends."

This was answered by a hard pressure of the hand from Mr. Anderson, for he could not reply.

"And now, sir, be seated, and tell me of your son," continued Hardamer.

After they had retired into a small room, or recess, back of the shop, Mr. Anderson said—

"My boy, after he had so cruelly, and unrighteously deserted your daughter, of whose marriage with him I knew nothing, went to the south, where a dangerous illness put a sudden check upon his career of folly. Recovering, partially, from this, he returned home, broken in spirits, and well nigh broken in constitution. Gradually, and from the effect of the operation of right thoughts, he began to show a concern for those around him. For years, I had been grieved at witnessing his entire devotion to self. This, I at once perceived to be the beginning of a new life, if the feeble spark could be made to spread and at last kindle into a flame. And it did spread; slowly, very slowly, but steadily. He spoke not of this change himself—and seemed by no means encouraged by it; indeed, it had the effect to render him very unhappy at times—though, in general, he was cheerful in the presence of any one. Sometimes, I could see that he was weighed down with a more than ordinary concern; and I at last began to fear, that he had, in his days of folly, committed some crime that now caused him to tremble. This concern seemed to increase, as he grew more and more thoughtful about the happiness of all around him. At length it reached a point in his mind which rendered it impossible to conceal it longer, and he related to me the fact of his marriage with your daughter, and his intention to return to Baltimore for her, and do all in his power to make her future days happier than he had rendered some of those which are past. He is here with me for that purpose."

For some time Mr. Hardamer was silent. There was a powerful struggle, within, of the selfish principle. He was not glad, at this unexpected news; for, at once, the idea of losing the child who, of all his children, evinced a degree of concern and tenderness for him that had become, in his present condition, necessary to his happiness, presented itself, and he could

not endure it. But he saw this to be wrong, and struggling against it for a few moments, said—

"What you tell me, ought to fill me with peculiar pleasure. I wish I could say that it did. Misfortunes have narrowed down my sources of happiness, and almost the only one I now have, is this same child, you have come to take away from me." The old man's voice again trembled. "She is greatly changed, sir, since her marriage. Affliction of mind has purified as well as chastened her; and she is now every thing a father's heart could desire. God bless her, and your son too, if he is changed as much as she is!"

And old Mr. Hardamer could restrain his feelings no longer, but bent down his head, and sobbed like a child. Mr. Anderson, too, was moved, and after the pause of a few moments, said—

"Sweet are the uses of adversity."

"Just the words my wife repeated last night," ejaculated Hardamer, raising his head suddenly, his countenance instantly undergoing a change. "Her very words! And now I remember that I have hope still. Another one of my proud, foolish girls is beginning to feel her sister's example. Thank heaven, I have hope that I shall see my Genevieve happy, and not be robbed of all comfort myself. It is true, but I never could have believed it—"Sweet are the uses of adversity!"

Genevieve sat sewing at the window on the same morning on which the interview between her father and Mr. Anderson occurred. Her mother and Geneva were near her, also busy with the needle, and Gertrude sat apart from them all, reading a novel, her mind in a moody and gloomy condition. It was probably about eleven o'clock when the door opened and the father entered with a stranger. Genevieve arose to her feet and looked them both in the face inquiringly. All the morning she had been thinking, with more than her usual anxious tenderness of feeling, about her absent husband, and the instant her father entered, in company with an elderly man, a stranger, her heart misgave her, that the visit had some connection or other with the one who occupied her thoughts more and more every day. She was not long kept in suspense.

"This is my Genevieve," said Mr. Hardamer, advancing towards his daughter, and taking hold of her hand. "And a dear, good girl she is! If your son has changed as much as she has changed in a few months, then will they be happy together. And may heaven bless them!" he added, fervently, his voice trembling down into an inaudible tone.

Old Mr. Anderson came forward quickly, and grasped the hand of Genevieve.

"God bless you, my child!" he said, kissing her pale cheek. "I have come to restore to you

your husband. And, I would fain hope, that he is worthy to claim your hand." Mr. Anderson could utter no more. The tender emotions awakened by the interview, unmanned him. The feelings of the aged are less subject to their control, than the feelings of those in the vigor of middle life. He leant his head upon the shoulder of his new found child, and wept.

The whole scene, so sudden and so unexpected, startled Mrs. Hardamer, and the two sisters. Gertrude was confounded—Genevieve surprised and delighted. Mr. Anderson's appearance at once commanded respect, and his mild, benevolent countenance gave a favorable impression of his character. In a few minutes, a more orderly introduction took place, and such explanations were given, as enabled each one to perceive the new position which affairs had assumed. There was but one heart present that did not warm with a pure delight, and that was the heart of Gertrude. Instead of rejoicing at the happy change about to take place in the truly hard lot of her sister, a feeling of envy and hatred was aroused. She felt rebuked by the whole scene, and that annoyed and irritated her.

CHAPTER XIII.

MORE PLEASING INDICATIONS.

ABOUT one week after Mr. Anderson had left home, a neighbor stopped at the door and left a letter for his wife. He had been to the post-office, and seeing one there, directed to her, had brought it along with him.

Retiring at once to her own room, she broke the seal, and read—

"MY DEAR JANE:—You are painfully anxious, I know, to hear from me, and I now write to relieve your suspense, and, at the earliest moment that I can do so. I have seen the wife of our dear, erring, but repentant boy; and they have met, and been reconciled. And who is she!—and what is she! These are the first questions, to which your heart yearns for an answer. In a word, then, she seems to be all that we could desire. A few months of painful disappointments and trials have done much for her; or her character, when she was married, has been greatly misrepresented. Her father, during the last year, has failed in business, and been much reduced in circumstances. This reverse, from all that I can see, has wrought

upon him, a salutary change, and other members of his family seem also to feel a like happy influence. When I called upon him, alone, and announced my name, he did not, at first receive me kindly; but, in a few moments, he softened down, and I saw that the man was sound at heart. His affections are warmly centred upon the child our boy has married; and this deep affection has been called out within the past year. After her desertion, as far as I can learn, she was treated with great unkindness by all of the family, and by her father with coldness and indifference. Cut off from all hope of future distinction in society, which had been her ruling passion, and, having added to this the sorrows of a disappointed affection, and the pains of cruel persecution and neglect, she was driven into the right way. It seems, that, as a measure of relief from the distracting thoughts that passed through her mind, and the gloomy feelings that oppressed her, she resorted to the various domestic employments, incident to a family, that had before seemed degrading in her eyes. Her father's reverses, no doubt, awakened a lively sympathy in her mind, and she, therefore, sought to alleviate his trouble in every possible way. And you know how much it is, in the power of a child, by little attentions and affectionate care, to sooth the heart of a parent whose mind is not at ease.

"Once in the right way, under circumstances, too, where the only relief the mind can obtain from sad thoughts, is while walking in that way, and there is every thing to hope. It seems, that she never thought of looking back. The beautiful flowers that she found, ever and anon, springing on her new pathway, wooed her onward. And, as she continued to move forward, the flowers became more frequent, and their perfume sweeter. The change in her, if what she once was be truly told me, is far greater than that in our dear boy. I already love her; and I know you will take her at once to your bosom.

"I saw her before William did. Poor boy! As the moment approached for him to meet, face to face, the woman with whose affections he had so cruelly trifled, his heart seemed to fail him. But I took words to him from his wife before he saw her again, and when they met, there was an instant oblivion of the past, and a world of new affection created in their hearts. They were suffered to meet alone. No eye, but that of the Invisible, should look upon such an interview.

"Day after to-morrow we shall start for home; and, of course, our new found relation will return with us. She seems overjoyed at what has happened; and I can perceive that there exists between her and our William, just such a deep and pure affection, notwithstanding the past, as my heart delights to see. I trust that I am not allowing my gratified feelings to

create false hopes; but it seems to me that our last days are going to be our happiest. How wonderfully is evil over-ruled for good! How often does true delight spring from the operations of deep affliction! But I shall soon be with you, and then I can say to you a thousand things now crowding upon my thought.

Your's ever,

T. ANDERSON."

"Why, how do you do, Mr. Anderson? What in the world has brought you this far from home?" said an elderly man, advancing with a quick step across the deck of a steamboat, that was gliding swiftly down the Potomac, two days after the preceding letter was written.

"And how do you do, Mr. Illerton," responded the individual addressed, grasping the hand that was extended towards him.

"But what are you doing away here? You haven't answered me that yet!" said the first speaker.

"Why, I suppose I am on some such business as you are, friend Illerton," he replied, smiling.

"Oh! Aye! William has been taking a wife then, has he? Well, that's clever. Who did he marry?"

"You jump to conclusions as rapidly as ever, I see," replied Mr. Anderson. "But, I suppose you are half right, at least. The name of my new daughter was Hardamer."

At the mention of that name, a well grown boy, rather poorly dressed, who had been standing against the railing, started and turned upon the two individuals a look of inquiring interest.

"Hardamer," repeated Mr. Illerton, musingly. "Well, I believe I never heard of that name before. I hope she's as good a girl as my boy's got, for I think your William is about making a very fine man. He sowed some wild oats, it is true. But he has gathered in the troublesome harvest, and, I suppose, is tired of that kind of farming. I wish you joy, my old friend!" he added again, shaking the hand of Mr. Anderson. "The young folks are all snug in the cabin, I suppose, and have discovered each other before this," he continued. "Well, we'll let 'em enjoy themselves by themselves, for awhile. Young blood don't always mix well with old blood."

"Who has Henry married?" asked Mr. Anderson, as his old friend and neighbor paused.

"Well, I can't say that I know much about her, except that her name was Anne Earnest, and that she seems to have the disposition of an angel," replied Mr. Illerton.

"And an angel she is!" murmured the boy just mentioned, whose ears were taking in every word that passed between the individuals who were talking. But they heard him not; nor, indeed, did they notice his presence.

Just at that moment, the whole party from

below emerged upon deck—consisting of the wife of old Mr. Illerton, her son and his young bride, Mr. and Mrs. Anderson, and Illerton's two sisters.

The two young men were old acquaintances. They had been raised together. And the reader understands perfectly the relation which Anne and Genevieve bore to each other. A few brief, but somewhat embarrassing explanations took place, when the parties all so unexpectedly met in the cabin, upon the starting of the steamboat; and then mutual and sincere congratulations ensued.

The boy moved away as he saw them approaching, and retired to another part of the boat. A close observer could readily have perceived, that, from some cause, his mind was ill at ease. His face was pale and thin, and he seemed by no means possessed of the healthful vigor usual to boys of his age. He went far forward, upon the bow of the boat, and resting his arms upon the railing, stood looking with a vacant gaze upon the surface of the water. A heavy sigh soon told that his thoughts were busy with no pleasing subjects, and, as if to get rid of them, he raised up from his half-recumbent position, and commenced walking backwards and forwards. After the passage of half an hour, he moved towards the after part of the boat. His eye rested upon Anne and Genevieve, seated alone, in earnest conversation, and he paused hesitatingly. Then, as if from a sudden resolution, he walked forward to where they were sitting, and stood before them.

"Isaac, is it possible!" exclaimed, at once, both Genevieve and Anne, looking with surprise and concern into the face of the pale and agitated boy.

"Yes, it is me; or at least all that is left of me," replied Isaac Wilson—for it was none other than he—endeavoring to put on an unconcerned expression of countenance, as a mechanical means of controlling his feelings.

"Well, Isaac, what are you doing now?" asked Genevieve, or Mrs. Anderson, in a voice of kind concern.

"I'm not doing any thing, just now, Miss Genevieve," he replied and his voice trembled in spite of his efforts to seem composed, while his tone was sad and even desponding. "I've been sick for two months, and, of course, couldn't work much all that time. If it hadn't been that I was living with a kind-hearted, though very poor old woman, who, I believe was good to me because she had a wild son who had gone away, I must have been sent to the poor-house. After I got well enough to work, I could get nothing to do in Georgetown. I heard of a seat of work to be had in Fredericksburg; and the tender-hearted old woman, stinted herself to lend me enough money to carry me there. But I'm afraid when I get there, that the seat will be taken, and even if it is not, I may find it hard

work to get in, for no boss likes to take a boy like me. I have been questioned so often and so close, and have had to tell so many downright lies about who I was and where I came from, that it makes me sick to think about it."

"Then, Isaac, why don't you go home again?" said Anne, or Mrs. Illerton, as she was now to be called.

"Indeed, indeed, Miss Anne, I have wished a thousand and a thousand times that I was back again into the old shop. But I'm afraid to go back. Mr. Hardamer, you know—asking your pardon Miss Genevieve—is so cruel when he gets angry. And, if I was to go home alone, he could do any thing he pleased with me."

"You needn't fear but that father will relieve you back kindly," said Mrs. Anderson.

"I wish I could think so, Miss Genevieve," said the boy, earnestly.

"I am sure he will," replied Mrs. Anderson. "Father as well as some of the rest of us, you among the number, I perceive, has changed greatly, in the last few months. He is, besides, much reduced in circumstances, and your assistance would be a good deal to him."

The countenance of Isaac brightened up, and he replied—

"You almost make me feel like going home. I call it home, for I have not felt as if I had any place to go to that I could really call home, since I went away."

"Be advised by us, Isaac," said Mrs. Illerton, with kind concern. "Go directly back to Baltimore. Mrs. Anderson, here, will give you a letter to her father, I know, that will be all the introduction you want to give you a welcome back; for, her word, now, goes a good deal farther than it did when you were there. You will give him a letter, will you not, Genevieve?"

"That I will, right gladly, if he will go back," replied Mrs. Anderson.

"Then I'll go home," said Isaac, emphatically.

"That is, if I can get home."

"We'll arrange all that for you," said Mrs. Illerton.

"I shall never forget your goodness to me, Miss Anne! From the day you came into our house, I have had better desires than ever I had before. And many and many a time, since I went away, has the good advice you gave us all, come back into my mind, and kept me from doing many things to which I was tempted. I don't know how it is; but I never resolved to do what was wrong, but I thought of you; and many and many a time that thought has saved me from actions that would have brought me more troubles than any I have ever had."

Mr. Illerton, who was standing at a short distance when Isaac came up, observed that he had entered into conversation with his young wife and her friend. Curiosity impelled him to draw near, and he heard, without being observed by him, the entire compliment paid by the boy to

Anne. At the moment he ceased speaking, he recognized him, and extending his hand, he said—

"Why, how do you do, my young friend? This is the first time that I've seen you since the day you called to let me know where I should find this young lady," glancing at Anne—"I owe you a thousand thanks!"

"It was all for her sake," replied Isaac, looking towards the person indicated. "And it was one, if the only good action of my life."

"That's true, every word of it!" said Illerton.

"Well, I like a whole-hearted friend, and Anne seems to have no other."

"I think it most time to dispense with compliments," remarked Anne, smiling, "and so I will give your thoughts a different direction. It is an old saying that one good turn deserves another; and as you seem to think Isaac has rendered you a service, I propose, as he now stands in need of a friend, that you hold yourself in that relation to him."

"That I will most cheerfully," replied Mr. Illerton. "And now tell me in what I can serve you?"

Isaac hesitated to reply, and Anne said—

"He left Mr. Hardamer, some months ago, and we have been persuading him to go back. From what he has said, I have concluded, that he parted with nearly the last of his money when he paid his passage, and cannot, of course, return without aid."

"We'll soon arrange all that for him," replied Mr. Illerton, kindly. "And so you have made up your mind to go back?"

"Yes sir. I haven't seen much peace since I went away. Somehow, or other, every thing has gone wrong with me. I used to think, that if I was only my own master, and free to spend all the money I could earn, I should be happy. But, after I went off, I was afraid to look for work in town, and had no money with which to pay for a passage to any other place. There were three of us, and we set off to walk all the way to Washington, the nearest point at which we could hope to get work. All together we had not over a dollar. At the end of the first day, we stopped at a house near the road, and asked for something to eat. We had been afraid to stop at the taverns for fear of being taken up for runaways; and were now very hungry and tired. At this house they gave us some bread and milk, but did not ask us to stay. We set out, after finishing our meal, with hearts somewhat heavier than they were in the morning, for it was growing dark very fast. We had no prospect before us but that of keeping on all night, or laying down in some fence-corner to sleep. We were too much fatigued to do the former, so, after holding a consultation, we concluded to cross over an adjoining field to a haystack that was in sight, and try to rest as comfortably as possible.

"Here we made ourselves beds, and lay down, and so tired were we, that we soon fell asleep. It was broad day-light the next morning when I awoke, wet, and cold. It had rained during the night, and my clothes were in places, literally soaked with water. I was so hoarse that I could hardly speak, and so stiff that I moved myself with difficulty. Gradually, I recovered the use of my limbs, and we started on again. Not, however, until we had tossed up a cent to determine whether we should keep on, or go back and behave ourselves better, for we were already sick of our adventure. That night, at about nine o'clock, we arrived in Washington, even more tired than we were on the night previous. The whole of our dollar was gone, and we did not know a single individual in the city. For some time we wandered about the streets, hungry and fatigued, and were finally obliged to lie out during the night. We were really in a sad condition on the next morning; and so hungry, that we were compelled to beg some bread and meat. For my part I do not recollect ever to have felt as wretched. My joints were so stiff that I could hardly walk. My skin was dry and hot, and a constant tickling in my throat kept me coughing all the while.

"For the greater part of that day we strolled about the city and through the public buildings. As the day began again to decline, we agreed that it was best to separate, and each endeavor to provide some place of refuge for himself. I went over to Georgetown, and made application at a shop there for work,

"What do you want with work, ha?" said the man I addressed, looking up at me from the bench on which he was seated, with a forbidding, half angry countenance.

"I must have work, or I can't live," said I, confounded and distressed at the rough reception I had received.

"You'd better go back to your master," he replied, looking down at his work, "I don't harbor runaway apprentices."

"I was confounded, and retreated hastily from the shop. 'How should he know that I had run away,' I said to myself, in alarm, as I walked on.

"I soon saw another shop, and into this I ventured. To my application for work, I was asked by a keen-looking man, where I had served my time.

"In Washington," I answered promptly.

"Who with?" said the man.

"To this question, of course, I could not reply, for I did not know a single shoemaker in Washington. My hesitation and confusion betrayed the falsehood, and, suddenly turning from the man, I hurried again into the street.

"As I passed along, I observed a kind-hearted looking old woman standing in the door of a small house. 'Here is my last hope,' I thought to myself, and so, going up to her, I asked her

if she could not give me something to eat, for I was very hungry. How my heart warmed under her pleasant smile and motherly tone of voice! She at once told me to come in. It was nearly night, and her table was set, with a clean white cloth, against one side of the room, ready for her supper. It contained a single plate, a knife and fork, and a cup and saucer, showing that the meal was preparing for herself alone. To her kind invitation I seated myself, and tried to rest my wearied limbs. But I ached so all over, that freedom from motion was not rest. Very soon she brought in a large plate of toast, some cold meat, and the tea things. But when I attempted to eat, I found that my appetite craved but little food.

"You are not well," she said looking me in the face with concern.

"Indeed, ma'am, I do not feel very well," I replied, filling up.

"She observed that I was troubled and seemed much concerned.

"Where are you going? Do you belong to Georgetown or the City?" she asked.

"I hesitated a moment, for my first lies had brought me off so badly; and I did not feel like deceiving one who was kind to me, and seemed so good.

"I—I—am from Baltimore," I replied.

"Ah, indeed!" she said brightening up. "My boy went there a good many years ago, when he run away from his master here," she added, her voice sinking into a sad tone. "Runaway apprentices never come to any good."

"Her words smote upon my heart; and I turned my head away, so that she should not see the expression of my face. She observed the sudden movement, and, I suppose, the thought occurred to her that I might be a runaway apprentice."

"I hope you havn't left your master!" she said, with evident concern.

"Yes, ma'am, it is true," I replied, my face reddening. "But I was not well treated. If my master had been kind to me, nothing on earth would have induced me to have left him."

"The old woman shook her head, and seemed grieved."

"You boys," she said, "are not good judges in these matters. And, even if you were not well treated, your condition was, I doubt not, much better than it is now."

"I could but acknowledge the truth of what she said; and she went on:

"I have known a good many runaway apprentices in my time, and I never yet knew one that did not repent of what he had done, and wish himself back in his master's house a thousand times. It is always difficult for such a boy to get work, for he will be suspected, and few masters have any disposition to encourage runaways."

"I did not reply to this, although I felt its

truth; but rising from the table, I took off my coat, and rolled up my sleeve to exhibit to her two or three deep cuts which the cowhide of the constable had left upon my arm.

"My back has nearly a dozen worse than them," I said, "now fresh, and some of them clear through the skin; and, besides, I have twenty seams and scars there from previous floggings!"

"This touched the old woman's heart, and she said with much feeling—

"Indeed, indeed, some boys have a hard time of it! But we won't talk any more about that. You want a good bed to-night; and cannot get one unless I provide it for you!"

"She then took me up into a little room, in which was a soft bed with snow white sheets. In ten minutes I was fast asleep, and did not awake until it was broad daylight. But I forget that you may not be as much interested as I am in all this," he said, suddenly recollecting, that he was telling his story without being asked for it.

"Go on, by all means!" replied his listeners, each one of whom felt a warm interest in Isaac.

"Well, on the next morning," he continued, "when I awoke, long after sun-rise, I found my joints so stiff that when I touched my feet to the floor, I nearly fell over. My head reeled, and ached with a sudden and dreadful pain. I was forced to get into the bed again. I cannot tell you how bad I felt. Sick and penniless, and in a strange place. After awhile, the old woman came up, and as soon as she saw me, she said,

"I am afraid you are not well?"

"Indeed, ma'am," I replied, "I feel very sick, and my limbs are so stiff that I cannot stand on my feet!"

"Then you had better lie quiet for to-day!" she said, kindly, "I will bring you up a cup of tea, and some little thing to eat!" and so saying, she went down stairs.

"I never felt so strange as I did when she left the room. Never, since my own mother died, had any one who seemed so much like her, been kind to me. It choked me right up, and made a baby of me. In about half an hour, she came up, bringing a tub of water. She then bathed my feet with her own hands; and, after she had dried and rubbed them with a towel, she went down again and brought me a large bowl of tea. After I had drank this off, she sat by me for some time, looking me all the while in the face, and seeming pleased at the kind service she was rendering me. In a little while, the perspiration broke out all over me, and I gradually sunk again into sleep. When I awoke, I felt much better, and wanted to get up; but the kind old woman would not let me. On the next morning I was much better, and after I had dressed myself and eaten my break-

fast, I prepared to go out again in search of work.

"The repulses I had already met, and the close questionings which I expected to meet, made me dread the task. But it had to be done, and so I went out.

'Come back at dinner time,' said Mrs. Arm— for that was her name—as I left the door.

"After I was in the street, my heart failed me. I so dreaded to go into a boot-maker's shop, that I finally determined to walk over to Washington, and see if I could meet with Tom or Bill. I thought that, perhaps, they had been more successful than I had in looking for work. As I came along the street which runs from the bridge to the public offices, I looked through a window and saw three or four boys at work upon their benches. How I did envy them! And how I blamed myself for having so foolishly left my master. I thought, at first, that I would go into this shop and ask for work. But, as I turned to enter the door, the thought of a rebuff discouraged me, and I kept on towards the city. Here I wandered about from street to street, and at last found myself at the capitol. On entering, the first persons I saw were Bill and Tom.

CHAPTER XIV.

TROUBLES OF A RUNAWAY APPRENTICE.

"WHAT luck, Ike?" was the first salutation I met, from my two fellow-runaways.

"None at all," I replied, despondingly.

"This is rather a poor kind of a business, I'm thinking," said Bill, with an effort to seem indifferent. But I could see that he was far from being easy in mind.

"Poor enough," I said, "as far as I have had any thing to do with it. I wish I was safely back in Baltimore again?"

"Well, I can't just say that I do," replied Tom. "I'm a free man now, and free I'm determined to stay. I'm going to quit the trade, what do you think of that?"

"Going to quit the trade!" I said, in surprise. "Well, and what then?"

"Why, I mean to go to sea; for there is no chance of getting work here. Every boss shoe-maker in the place suspects me of being a runaway apprentice, and won't have any thing to do with me."

"But how are you going to get on board of a vessel?" I asked.

"That's easy enough. A schooner sails from here to-morrow for Norfolk; and the captain says he will give me a passage down; and when once there, he says, there will be chances enough to get to sea, either in the United States, or merchant service. I want Bill to go, but he's afraid of salt water. Wont you go? I think I can get you a passage down?"

To this I shook my head. I never had much idea of going to sea. "And what are you going to do, Bill?" I asked.

"Me?" he said, with a slight uneasy emotion. "Why—why—seeing no chance of getting any work here, for every boss that I've been to see will have nothing to do with me; I have agreed to keep bar in a tavern."

"Keep bar?" I said, in surprise; for bad as I was, I had always thought it degrading to mix liquor for every drunken fellow and worthless negro.

"It's a fact," said Bill, rather sadly. "I never thought I would come to this, but I must do it, or starve."

"When do you begin?" I asked.

"The present bar-keeper has become so worthless, that he is to be sent away this afternoon, and then I shall commence."

"You'd better go with me?" said Tom.

Bill shook his head.

"Suppose we all go back," said I.

"Never!" replied Tom, emphatically, and,

"Never," added Bill, with less heartiness.

After wandering about for a while we went down to the wharf on the Potomac, where lay the vessel in which Tom was to sail for Norfolk. The captain, who seemed to have taken a liking to him, wanted us all to stay to dinner. After this was over, we shook hands with Tom, who was to leave in the morning, and Bill and I went back to the city, a little melancholy at parting with an old companion, and at the doubtful prospect before us.

As we entered the city, near the market-house, Bill pointed to a sign before a low, dirty looking grog-shop, on which were the words—"LAFAYETTE HOTEL AND TRAVELLER'S RETREAT."

"That's the place," he said.

"What place?" I asked, for I did not understand him.

"Why the tavern where I am going."

"Don't call that a tavern, Bill," said I. "It's nothing but a low, mean, dirty grog-shop."

"Well, that's the place," he said, "any how. You know the old copy the master set us at night school:—Necessity knows no law."

I did not reply, for I felt too bad. In a few moments we were at the door, and I went in with him. The appearance here was even worse than it was outside. The room was small, with a counter and lattice work on one side. A row of decanters occupied one shelf, and below this, were three barrels, marked,

'WHISKEY,' 'BRANDY,' and 'RUM.' The upper shelves behind the counter were filled with a medley that it would be hard to describe. There were apples, cakes, herrings, onions, and tumblers containing marbles, slate pencils, thimbles, &c. In the window were several decanters of liquor, with lemons between them; some cakes and some herrings. At the end of the row of shelves hung several strings of onions. This was the tavern! The inmates consisted of a red-faced man behind the counter, who greeted Bill as we entered with a kind word and a smile—two men playing dominoes at a table—a negro drinking at the counter, and a man half drunk, lounging upon a bench. The fumes of the place, at first, made me feel sick; but in a little while, I could breathe the air more freely. The keeper of the shop drew us some liquor, and after I had taken a glass, I began to feel much happier than I had been for several days. Bill took his place as bar-keeper, and drew liquor and mixed punches and slings with a dexterity that seemed to gratify the owner of the place very much; for he looked upon every movement with a peculiar smile. I staid until nearly night, and then went over again to Georgetown. The old lady seemed glad to see me, and asked why I had not been to dinner. I made some excuse, but did not give the true reason.

'I think I have got you some work,' she said. 'I went to see an old friend of mine, in the trade, and he said he thought he could seat you.'

I was, of course, very much pleased at this intelligence, and, in the morning, Mrs. Armor went with me to the shop where work had been promised. I was surprised and confused on entering to find myself in the same shop where, but two or three days before, I had falsely stated that I had served my time in Washington.

'This is the young man I was speaking to you about,' said my kind old friend, advancing to the counter, behind which stood the boss, busy at the cutting-board.

'I am sorry to tell you, Mrs. Armor,' said the man, gravely, 'that I can't seat him in my shop; eyeing me at the same time with a forbidding aspect.'

'And why not?' she asked.

'Because he is a runaway apprentice, and a liar to boot!' replied the man in an half angry tone.

Mrs. Armor turned upon me a look of doubt and inquiry, and thus appealed to, I said—

'I am sorry to say, Mrs. Armor, that, when questioned here a few days ago, I said that I had served my time in Washington. But, what could I say? If I had confessed that I had left my master, what chance would there have been for work?'

'You understand now, sir, how he is situated,

and why he tried to mislead you,' said the old woman, turning to the owner of the shop. 'He has been very badly treated, and almost forced to leave his master. He must have work or he can't live. Wont you give him just a little! Without money or friends in a strange place, his situation is necessarily a distressing one.'

'No, I will not give him a bit of work!' he replied. 'Let him go home to his master and behave himself. A boy that will lie about one thing will lie about another. And, if you'll take my advice, Mrs. Armor, you'll turn him out of doors and tell him to go about his business.'

'Never!' said the old woman, as she turned away, and we left the shop together.

We walked along in silence, until we came to her house, which we entered, and then she said kindly—

'Isaac, you musn't be discouraged. All the people in Georgetown ain't like that man, if he is an old friend of mine. You must stay here until something turns up in your favor; and that will be right soon, I feel certain.'

'I hope so,' I said, gloomily. But I felt too bad to say much. After supper that night, I went over to the city to see Bill. I found him busy behind the counter, mixing liquor for several persons who stood around the bar. He seemed cheerful, and even pleased with his new employment; for he chatted away as lively as any of the noisy inmates of the tavern. He did not see me when I entered, for the room was pretty full, and, as I retired to the back part, near a table where some men were playing cards, and others throwing dice, I had a chance to look on without being observed. I soon saw him pour out some brandy in a glass, and after adding some sugar and water, turn it off himself. I now perceived that his face was flushed, and that, about his manner, there was an unusual degree of excitement. 'Getting tipsy, as I live!' I said, laughing to myself. At that moment his eye rested upon me, and I advanced to the bar.

'What'll you drink, Ike?' was his first salutation.

'Give me some brandy toddy,' I said.

'That's the stuff for you. It'll do your heart good, Ike,' he said, as he pushed my glass across the counter.

I drank it off at a single draught, and soon began to feel my spirits rising. Bill was kept busy for the next hour by the constant calls of customers, and I had but little chance to talk with him. I sat near the table most of this time, looking at the keeper of the place and another man, who were playing cards. They had a good deal of money staked, and the tavern-keeper won at almost every game. The man with whom he was playing was a stout countryman, who grew more and more restless

and excited every moment. Suddenly he sprang from the table—

‘You have cheated me!’ he said, with a bitter oath, clenching his fist, and looking the tavern-keeper fiercely in the face.

‘You are a liar!’ said the tavern-keeper, also springing up and seizing the countryman by the throat. In the next moment a powerful blow from the latter knocked him at full length upon the floor.

He was soon upon his feet again, his face inflamed, and his eyes flashing fire. With a dreadful imprecation, he hurled a chair, which he had seized, in rising, at the head of his antagonist, who, in turn, fell to the floor. Without giving him an opportunity to rise, the tavern-keeper kicked him in the face and stomach three or four times, causing the blood to gush from his mouth and nose. Then dragging him to the door, he dashed him into the street, swearing, that if he came in again, he would murder him. The man did not attempt to re-enter, and I felt greatly relieved. While the scuffle was going on, I had retreated inside of the bar. Already, Bill seemed to have a degree of relish for such scenes.

‘He’s a whole team, ain’t he?’ he said, alluding to the keeper of the house. I felt no inclination to reply, and so remained silent. In a few minutes I went away, half resolving never again to enter the place. Still more troubled in mind, I hastened along the lonesome way back to Georgetown. But I will not trouble you with these minute details. In the course of the next few weeks, I was enabled to get some work; and nearly all of the money I earned I gave to my kind old friend. Every now and then my desire to see Bill would return, and then I would go over to the city, and spend an evening at the ‘Lafayette Hotel.’ Bill had learned to play cards, and dominos, and to handle the dice-box. He would always insist upon my playing, and I soon grew fond of the pastime. Some little stake was always necessary to keep up the interest of the game, and this created a desire to be winner, and at last for the profits of successful playing. But I could rarely get ahead of Bill, who would win and pocket my money with as much pleasure as if I had been a stranger or his enemy. This continued, until one night, in returning from the city, I was caught in a heavy thunder-shower, and wetted to the skin. From that night, for two or three months, I was unable to do any thing at all. I had a long spell of sickness, and suffered much. But never once, during that time, did old Mrs. Armor treat me with coldness. She continued like a mother, in all of her actions towards me. When I got able to go about, I could get no work. My clothes were nearly all worn out, and I did not want to be a burden any longer, upon my old friend. As I said before, she gave me money

enough to pay my passage as far as Fredericksburg. I did not see bill before I started. To tell the truth, I was afraid that he would persuade me to take a game, and win my passage money.”

When Isaac had finished his narration, which was listened to with much interest, Mr. Illerton remarked, that runaway apprentices generally had a pretty hard time of it.

“Indeed, they have, sir,” said Isaac. “I was happy at home, in comparison with what I have been since I went away.”

“And I hope you will be happier still when you go back,” said Anne.

“I hope I shall, Miss Anne,” replied the boy. “If I don’t, I suppose it will be all my own fault.”

“I think it will, Isaac,” she said. “For I am sure, Mr. and Mrs. Hardamer will be very kind to you, if you will only try to please them.”

“Yes, that they will, Isaac, I can assure you,” added Mrs. Anderson.

“How glad I shall be to get home once more!” said the boy, warming with the idea.

When the steamboat drew up to Potomac Creek, Mr. Illerton handed Isaac a ticket for his passage back to Washington, and also slipped a bank note into his hand, with an injunction not to forget his old friend in Georgetown. The tears stood in the eyes of the boy, as he shook hands with Anne and Genevieve. But the parting was hurried and brief, and he was soon left alone, to linger for hours in the cabin of the steamboat before he was again on his way back. On his arrival in Washington, he went over to Georgetown to see Mrs. Armor.

“Why, bless my heart, Isaac! What has brought you back so soon?” exclaimed the old woman in surprise, as he entered her humble abode.

“I am going home,” was Isaac’s brief answer.

“Perhaps it’s the best thing you can do,” said Mrs. Armor, her face brightening up. “I have often thought so; but I couldn’t find the heart to urge it upon you. But what has made you change your mind?”

Isaac related the interview which had taken place on board of the steamboat, and ended by saying—

“Here is the note which Mr. Illerton gave me. You see it is for fifty dollars. Get it changed, and let me have as much as will carry me to Baltimore. The rest you will keep as part pay for what you have done for me.”

The old woman was poor, and the charge Isaac had been to her, she had felt a good deal; still she did not want to take the boy’s money, much as she stood in need of it.

“I don’t think I can take it, Isaac,” she said. “You want clothes very badly, and had better get yourself some.”

"I won't have a dollar more than will carry me to Baltimore!" replied Isaac, emphatically. "So you will have to keep it."

The old woman did not reply. "A good deed is never lost," were the words which came into her thoughts; and she looked upon Isaac with a new feeling of regard, and with something of regret at the separation soon to take place.

CHAPTER XV.

GETTING HOME AGAIN.

"WHY, how do you do, Mr. Wilkins?" said Mr. Hardamer, who had opened his front door in answer to a rap, a few evenings after Genevieve had left with her husband for a new home in Virginia. "Come, walk in. It's a long time since I've seen you in my house. It does one good to meet his old friend, now and then, when he has time for a social chat. But my old friends have grown pretty scarce of late." The closing sentence was uttered in a lower, and somewhat desponding tone.

"But adversity tries the stuff our friends are made of," replied the individual addressed; "and, it is almost worth the pain, to have all false ones driven from around us."

"True, sir, true!" said Mr. Hardamer. "But, come, walk into the back room."

The appearance of Mr. Wilkins, after a suspension of his visits for a whole year, surprised both Genevra and Gertrude. The former received him with an easy, cheerful, unembarrassed manner, that made him feel at once at home with her;—the latter, suddenly conceiving the idea that her old beau was on a wife-hunting expedition, and feeling a willingness to accept him in despair of making a better match, affected numerous smiling airs, and attractive graces, and accorded to him a wordy welcome.

The conversation during the evening was, of course, general, and, after spending an agreeable hour or two, Mr. Wilkins went away, singularly pleased with his visit, and very much inclined to call again in a very short space of time. He had dropped in, half out of curiosity to see what kind of a figure the high-minded young ladies cut under the new order of things, and, partly, for the want of some definite way of passing the evening.

"Mr. Wilkins has improved very much, since he was here before, don't you think he

has?" said Gertrude to her sister, after they had retired to their chamber.

"I don't know but that he has improved some," replied Genevra. "But, it is some time since he was here, and, perhaps, we see a little differently."

"He's as different as can be!" said Gertrude, in a positive tone; "and I give you fair notice, that I'm going to set my cap for him. He's my old beau, any how! And so I shall expect that you'll not go to pushing yourself in between us."

"You needn't be afraid of that," replied Genevra, in a quiet tone. "But, really, Gertrude, I would wait a little, if I were you, to see whether he had any serious intentions. If he should have none, and you should allow your feelings to become too much interested, it will only cause you trouble."

"O, fiddle-stick! What do you suppose he came here for?" said Gertrude in a tone slightly irritated. "He's my old beau, and has come, of course, to renew the acquaintance. Didn't you see how peculiarly he smiled whenever he spoke to me. I believe he always did love me; and if it hadn't been that I had chances above him, in view, we would have been married and settled down long ago. Heigh ho! Well," run on the matrimony-struck young lady,—"I never thought it would have come to this; but the crooked stick has to be taken sometimes. Any how, I expect he is beginning to do pretty well in business; and I'll make a bargain with him, before hand, that as soon as he is well enough off, he is to quit the business and go to store-keeping. And then I can hold my head up with any of them. But I'll never keep company with Anne Earnest, or rather, that Ilerton's wife, see if I do. I despise her and her husband too!"

Genevra did not reply, and her sister went on.

"He's an elegant looking man, that's certain. Ilerton looks like a fool along side of him; and I don't believe, any how, that he's half as rich as he's made out to be. I wonder if he will come again to-morrow night," she continued, glancing at herself in the glass. "I hope he won't be ashamed to be seen coming into this screwed up kind of a place. I am mad at Pa every time I think about this dirty alley!"

"But he can't help it, you know, Gertrude," interposed her sister.

"What's the reason he can't, I'd like to know?" replied Gertrude, warming at this implied rebuke. "Couldn't he get as good a house and at as cheap a rent in an open street, a little way up town? Besure he could! And he crept in here on purpose to mortify us! I know him!"

"Well, any how, I wouldn't talk so," said Genevra, soothingly.

"What's the reason you wouldn't, ha?" re-

plied Gertrude, evidently getting angry. "O, I forgot! you've begun to play pious. I'd go and join the church, if I was you. You'd make an acceptable member, no doubt!"

To this sneer, Genevra, though strongly tempted, made no reply. She felt a good deal irritated, as well as pained, but, happily, she controlled herself, and remained silent.

On the second evening after his visit, Mr. Wilkins called in again. From assiduous attention to business, he had obtained a good run of custom. And this was rapidly increasing. His stand was among the best in the city, and his customers, men who paid promptly, and were willing to pay a good price for a good article. Since his first visit, Mr. Hardamer had mentioned these things, in his family, and Gertrude was more inflamed than ever with a desire to secure so valuable a prize, notwithstanding he was a shoemaker. On this evening, in anticipation of a visit, she had dressed herself with extra care; and arrayed her face with extra smiles. But it so happened, that Mr. Wilkins' eye would wander naturally from the silk dress of Gertrude, to the plain calico one of Genevra—from her head, dressed off with a wreath of flowers, to that of her sister, upon which the dark hair was plainly parted—from the face set off with artificial smiles, to the one where an expression of meek thought appeared ever to rest. Genevra's countenance appeared to him much changed from what it had formerly been. Its aspect, though calm, indicated the existence of some painful thoughts, and interested his feelings exceedingly. He felt different when looking upon, or conversing with Gertrude; and was a little annoyed by her manner towards him.

"It's a delightful evening, Mr. Wilkins," said the latter, during a slight pause, allowing her face to expand into what she conceived to be a most fascinating smile.

"Yes, it is very pleasant," he replied, deliberately, the recollection forcing itself upon him, more strongly, at every word, that, without, it was foggy, and the air filled with a penetrating mist. "It is a little foggy, but still it is mild and pleasant."

Gertrude saw at once, that she had made a blunder, but still, she had gained what she wanted, the particular attention of the young man, and therefore cared little for it.

"Have you been to any parties lately?" she said, now that she had his ear.

"Not very lately," he replied. "Let me see? Yes; I was at one week before last."

"Ah, indeed! Where was it?" she asked, with animation.

"At Mr. Berlin's," replied Wilkins.

"Indeed! Have they begun to give parties? Why the girls are mere children yet," said Gertrude, affecting surprise.

"Caroline is quite a womanly sort of a body;

and entertained the company with ease. She is getting to be quite a favorite with the young men," remarked Mr. Wilkins.

This did not exactly please Gertrude, and she replied—

"I never saw much of her that was interesting. Indeed, I have always looked upon her as forward beyond her years."

Mr. Wilkins was less pleased with this remark than any he had heard, either on the present or preceding evening, and he turned with a feeling of relief towards Genevra, who made some observation intended to divert the conversation from the censorious turn it had taken. Directing his remarks towards her he elicited replies and observations that caused her to rise every moment more and more in his estimation. This, of course, did not escape the lynx-eyed observation of Gertrude, and her jealous and indignant feelings were kindled into an active flame. After he had gone, Gertrude went up to her chamber, for she could not feel at ease in the company of her father and mother, or Genevra, since the latter had so suddenly changed, and sat with them usually, during the evenings, but little.

It was near ten o'clock, and while Mr. and Mrs. Hardamer, with their daughter, were engaged in some pleasing conversation, that a low and hesitating knock was heard at the front door. On opening it, Mr. Hardamer perceived a pale-looking, and poorly dressed lad, who seemed evidently disposed to shrink out of the circle of light made by the candle he held in his hand.

"Well, sir, what do you want?" said Mr. Hardamer, not recognizing at the moment his old apprentice.

"Don't you know me?" said Isaac, in a hesitating voice, for it was he.

"Ike? Is it possible?" exclaimed Mr. Hardamer, holding the light close to the face of the boy. "Well what do you want?" he added, in a sterner tone.

"I have a letter for you from Genevieve," said Isaac.

"From Genevieve! Then come in, and let me have it," replied the old man in a kinder tone.

Isaac entered, and was ushered, in a moment, into the room where sat Mrs. Hardamer and Genevra.

"Bless me! Isaac! Is that you?" said Mrs. Hardamer.

"Yes ma'am, it's me, I believe," said the boy, sadly.

"Come, take a seat," said Mr. Hardamer, "and let us have the letter you say you've got."

Isaac drew a letter from his pocket, the seal of which Mr. Hardamer broke, and then read aloud. It run thus—

"MY DEAR FATHER:—I have met with Isaac,

and have persuaded him to go home. He will hand you this. From what he has told me, he has suffered a good deal since he went away, and is anxious to get back again. Speak kindly to him. I have pledged myself for his reception,—and for the sake of your absent child, do not let him be punished in any way. I am sure he will be both industrious and obedient, and try all he can to please you. Thomas, he tells me, has gone to sea, and William is keeping bar in a grog shop in Washington, and is turning out badly. Give to mother and sisters my affectionate regards, and believe me ever your obedient child,

GENEVIEVE."

After finishing the letter, old Mr. Hardamer went up to Isaac, and extending his hand, said, "Welcome home again, my boy! You have brought a good recommendation."

The unexpected manner of his old master, broke down the feelings of the boy still more, and in spite of all his efforts to restrain himself, he burst into tears.

"I will try and please you," he said, with an effort, as he regained some command over himself. "I confess that I acted wrong, when I went away. But I have suffered enough in mind and body for it. I am willing to make up to you all the time I have lost."

"If you come back in that spirit, Isaac," replied Mr. Hardamer, a good deal moved, "we shall, I am sure, get along well enough. We have both, no doubt, been a little to blame for the past. But," he said in a more lively tone, "let has beens be has beens, and for the future, let us all try to do better, and to be better."

After Isaac had related, at the request of his master and mistress, where he had been, and what he had done while away, Mrs. Hardamer handed him a light and directed him in his way to the garret, where Jimmy slept, and whose bed he was now to share. It was after eleven o'clock, when Isaac entered the garret. The noise of opening the door awoke the little boy, who, raising up, looked with surprise upon the apparition of his old fellow apprentice.

"Well, Jimmy, you see I'm back again," said Isaac, setting down the candle with an air of confidence and satisfaction, for he began already to feel about one hundred per cent. better than he had felt for some months.

"I'm glad of it," replied Jimmy, as soon as his eyes were fairly open and his mind comprehended the meaning of Isaac's unexpected presence; "for you'll like things now a good deal better than you used to."

"Well, I'm glad, too, Jimmy. And so things are different to what they used to be!"

"O yes, indeed are they!" said the little boy, earnestly. "Why, I haven't been scolded nor beat for a long time. When Mr. Hardamer

tells me to do any thing, he doesn't speak so loud and cross as he used to, nor threaten to give me the stirrup. And Mrs. Hardamer is different, too. I get a great many more good things to eat than we used to; and she takes care of my clothes, and gets me new ones, too. I'm glad you've come back, for I know you'll be satisfied. But, I hope you won't plague any of them, like you used to."

"No, indeed, Jimmy, that I will not!" replied Isaac, warmly. "But hasn't the old man got no other boy but you?"

"No, I'm the only one yet," said Jimmy.

"The shop's been moved since I went away. Where is it now?" asked Isaac.

"We're down in South street. Mr. Hardamer got a cheap little shop down there, and so he moved away from Market street."

"Have you got much work, now?" said Isaac, continuing his interrogations.

"Yes, we've got as much as we can do."

"How many jous have you?"

"We've got six," replied Jimmy, "and Mr. Hardamer was just saying yesterday, that he would have to seat another."

"Well, I'll save him that trouble," said Isaac, with an air and tone of satisfaction. "But how are the girls, Jimmy? The old man and woman are certainly very much changed, and I should think, from what I saw of Genevra this evening, that she is a little altered."

"She has been different for a week or so," replied Jimmy. "And I hope it will last. But Gertrude is pretty ugly yet. The others are about the same. But, you know, they never used to trouble us much. Genevieve's husband has come and taken her away. And she seemed so glad to go; and all the family, except Gertrude, seemed so pleased with him, that I am sure he must have changed too. I was very sorry when she went away, for she has been very good to me. And Anne, she has married Mr. Illerton!" continued the boy, his whole manner changing to a lively exhibition of delight. "Every body loves her. And she didn't forget me, neither. I went to see her after she was married; and she told me that she was going away for a little while, but would come back to live, and, that, if I would be a good boy, she would always be glad to see me. And I know she will. If it was for nothing else, I would behave myself just to please her."

"And so would I, Jimmy," replied Isaac, with warmth. "It was she that persuaded me to come home, or else I wouldn't have been here now."

"She persuaded you! Why where did you see her?" asked the little boy in surprise.

Isaac referred to the meeting on board of the steamboat; and the two boys continued to talk over the past for an hour before they fell off to sleep.

CHAPTER XVI.

SHOWING A PREFERENCE.

WHEN Genevra went to her room on the night of Mr. Wilkins' second visit, she was surprised to find Gertrude still sitting up, with a countenance indicating great perturbation of mind.

"I thought you were in bed and asleep long ago," she said.

"Did you, indeed?" responded Gertrude, with a sneer.

To this Genevra did not reply, and her sister broke out, passionately:—

"You're a mean, sneaking snake in the grass, so you are!"

"Really, I don't know what you mean, Gertrude!" she replied, pained exceedingly at this unexpected outbreak, and no little irritated in her feelings at the sudden and unaccountable charge.

"O no, of course not!" responded Gertrude. "Hypocrites are always very innocent! But I can see through all your tricks, as clear as daylight. Didn't I tell you, night before last, I want to know, that Mr. Wilkins came here to see me, and yet you tried to draw him off all you could. Do you suppose I couldn't see through you, ha?" and Gertrude walked about the small bed-chamber enveloped in a perfect atmosphere of angry excitement.

Here was a new difficulty for Genevra, whose good resolutions were of a very recent date, and trembled every day, under temptation from the evil within her, excited by some outward circumstance, on the brink of a departure from them. She was conscious of feeling gratified with the attentions paid her by Mr. Wilkins, and of being pleased with his conversation, and this rendered her present position still more embarrassing. For some moments, owing to a powerful struggle within of the evil against the good principles of her mind, she remained silent. At length she said, slowly, while a slight shade of sadness was in the tone of her voice:—

"Indeed, Gertrude, you bring a wrong charge against me. I made not the slightest effort to divert Mr. Wilkins attention from you."

"It's a lie!" responded Gertrude, in a positive, angry tone, while her face burned, and her eyes flashed with the evil affections that were ruling her.

Genevra felt, for a moment, the wild activities of evil principles within her, all aroused upon the instant; but, almost involuntarily, she turned her thoughts upwards, and in the silence

of a troubled heart, uttered this prayer—"Deliver me from evil."

Instantly she felt a consciousness, that, in silence, was her only hope for self-control; and sealing the words within her lips, that were fast rising upon her tongue, she quickly disrobed herself, got into bed, and turned her face to the wall.

Gertrude's anger had reached its culminating point, up to which it had suddenly ascended, and now it began slowly to decline. She, too, prepared for rest, and in a few minutes put out the light and got into the same bed with her sister. Still she was so much excited, and kept indulging her angry feelings against her sister so constantly, that she felt no inclination to sleep. Nor could Genevra, although she lay perfectly quiet, find oblivion for her troubled thoughts and wounded affections in refreshing slumber. It was probably an hour after Gertrude had lain down, and while she was still kept awake by the agitation of her feelings, that her sister who, she had supposed fast asleep, suddenly sobbed out, though vainly endeavoring to control herself. Genevra's thoughts had been busy with many painful reminiscences; and these, with the disturbance of mind produced by her sister's unkind remarks, had kept her awake. Gradually, she fell into a state of nervous, half dreamy wretchedness. In vain did she try to force from her thoughts the ideas and images that distressed her. They constantly recurred, upon every effort to banish them, in new forms and with added pain. In the end, she lost the control of her feelings and sobbed aloud. For more than a minute this continued, before she could restrain the passionate outbreak. Gertrude was startled, for a moment, and something like a shade of regret for what she had said, passed through her mind. But evil thoughts quickly displaced the momentary good impression, and she hardened her heart against her sister, and experienced an emotion of pleasure at having given her pain. But Genevra soon regained her self-control. The sudden ebullition subsided, and a peaceful calm fell upon her spirit. In a few minutes more, her senses were locked in quiet and refreshing sleep. The same sweet slumber did not visit the eyelids, of Gertrude. Many frightful dreams startled her from her pillow; and more than once, when thus suddenly awakened, did she shrink, trembling with a strange supernatural fear, close to the side of her sister. When the morning dawned she blessed the light that relieved her from the terrors of an imagination that gave form to the evil thoughts and feelings which she delighted to cherish.

A few days afterwards, Gertrude was invited to spend the evening out, and, it so happened, that Mr. Wilkins dropped in after night, and found Genevra alone. He was more pleased at this than he was even willing to acknowledge

to himself. And, notwithstanding the sad rating which Gertrude had given her, Geneva felt a secret delight, which she in vain endeavored to banish.

The conversation that passed between them during the evening, was, mainly, of a general character; but almost involuntarily did each examine the words and tone of the other, as if in search of some meaning concealed beneath the uttered sentiments. The visit closed by an invitation from Mr. Wilkins, to attend with him a concert to be given on the succeeding evening. Geneva of course accepted the invitation. But now a new source of trouble and difficulty presented itself. Such a marked preference for her company would, doubtless, so exasperate Gertrude, as to cause most unpleasant consequences. While still seated, after Mr. Wilkins had gone away, turning and turning the difficulty over in her mind, without perceiving any way of escape, her sister came home.

"Has any body been here?" she asked, fixing her eyes scrutinizingly upon Geneva.

For a moment the perplexed girl hesitated, and then replied,

"Yes, Mr. Wilkins has been here."

"He has?" said Gertrude, in a tone indicating surprise, disappointment, and rising anger against her sister.

"Yes," was the brief and simple reply of Geneva, who felt a little irritated at the manner and assumption of her sister, as well as troubled at the aspect of things.

"You sent him word, I suppose, that I was out," said Gertrude, making the charge with a manner that indicated her belief in the truth of what she alleged.

"Why, Gertrude?" responded Geneva, suddenly rising to her feet.

"You needn't put on that hypocritical face, young lady. I know you!" said Gertrude with a sneer. "You're just the one for such a mean, low-lived trick. But never mind, I'll be even with you!"

And so saying, Gertrude took up a light, and hurried off to her chamber. Mrs. Hardamer's attention had been attracted by the loud and angry tone of Gertrude's voice, and she was just on the eve of coming down to see what was the matter, when that young lady hurried past her chamber door. A feeling of uneasiness still prompted her to descend. She found Geneva with her head buried in her arms which were resting on the table before her.

"Geneva, what is the matter, child?" she asked, in a voice of concern.

Geneva lifted her head, and her mother perceived that the tears were fast flowing from her eyes.

"Tell me, my child, what is the matter?" she repeated more anxiously.

As soon as Geneva could so far control her feelings as to speak, she said—

"Gertrude has been talking very unkindly to me; and it seems as if I could not bear it."

"What was it about?" asked Mrs. Hardamer.

Geneva hesitated a moment or two, and then said—

"I would rather not say what it was about, mother, just now; but, indeed I am not to blame, for I have not done what she charges against me."

"Then, Geneva," replied her mother, "if you have done nothing, it will all come right at last. But do not, let me beg of you, engage in any quarrel or dispute with Gertrude. No good, but much harm can come from it. I would rather see you suffer wrong in silence, than have any jarring with your sister. I cannot tell you, my child, how greatly your recent effort to do right has affected your father and myself. Do not disappoint us in the hope we daily cherish, that you will never again give way to wrong desires and passions."

"I will try and not disappoint you," replied Geneva, the tears starting afresh from her eyes. "But I find it so hard to keep down my feelings, when any thing happens to irritate me. I am sometimes afraid that all my efforts will be of no use. And to think of being as I have been—Oh, mother! I wouldn't for all the world act and think and feel as I once did!"—and the afflicted girl looked eagerly into her mother's eyes with an expression that asked, as plain as words, for some direction; or some power of self-control.

Mrs. Hardamer, in her efforts to act from higher motives than such as had governed her for so many years, encountered as painful difficulties as those against which Geneva had to struggle. And she, too, had felt the insufficiency of human effort. But, in the sincere desire for a change of character, a desire created out of the very painfulness of her former state, a new light had dawned upon her. From an almost paralyzing sense of human weakness, had sprung up a confiding trust in that Being, who is Goodness itself and Wisdom itself. And she had, already, many times, when sorely tempted, lifted almost involuntarily her heart, and breathed an inward prayer for help. Nor had she failed to remark, that, always, after this silent invocation for aid, the evil that was struggling within her had less power, and soon retired, leaving her mind in a state of great tranquility. Her first thought, when Geneva ceased speaking, was to direct her to the same source for that power over evil which she did not herself possess, and she said—

"I have already learned, my dear child, that our own efforts to shun evil, will soon prove insufficient to protect us in temptation. We must look to Him who is the source of all good;

and, if we do so, then we shall be enabled to conquer even our own bad passions and desires. In no other way, I am sure, can we successfully fight against our constant propensity to give way to angry feelings or selfish thoughts."— And, as Mrs. Hardamer endeavored to point out the right way to her child, her own mind was enlightened, and she saw more clearly the truth she was endeavoring to impart. In this, she realized, what thousands have experienced, but few observed, viz: that so soon as we make the effort, from pure motives of regard to others, to impart to them right and timely instruction, our own minds become enlightened, and we are constituted mediums to them, whereby they receive and appropriate what is good and true.

When Geneva went up to her chamber, her sister had already retired. No word was uttered by either, and in a short time she sunk away into a peaceful slumber. On the next day, her greatest trouble was the anticipated effect the knowledge of her invitation to attend the concert with Mr. Wilkins that evening, would have upon Gertrude. One thing she resolved, and that was, to seal her lips in silence, no matter what her sister might say to her. After turning over the matter in her mind, she determined to ask her mother's advice, and, accordingly, stated her difficulty. Mrs. Hardamer thought a few moments, and then said—

"I will try and manage this for you, Geneva. Let me inform Gertrude first of your invitation, and perhaps I can prevent her ill temper from breaking forth."

Geneva, was, of course, very glad of this kind of interference, and felt a good deal relieved in mind. Gertrude was bitter in her language against her, when Mrs. Hardamer told her that she was going to a concert that night with Mr. Wilkins. But there was something in her mother's tone and manner, that soon checked a further expression of angry feelings.

"And remember," said Mrs. Hardamer, in closing, "that you must not use any improper language to Geneva. You have accused her falsely, and there you must rest. Neither your father nor myself can any longer suffer you to jar and quarrel as you have done. We are both positive in this, and will be obeyed."

The way in which this was uttered, carried with it, to the mind of Gertrude, a conviction that she must yield at least a degree of external obedience; but it in no way modified the inward feelings of resentment which she bore towards her sister. These she still cherished with added rancor.

Happily relieved from an unpleasant collision with her sister, Geneva dressed herself, and, when Mr. Wilkins came for her, was ready to go with him. Gertrude did not show herself

when he called. She was in her chamber, chewing the cud of bitter and evil fancies.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CO-PARTNERSHIP.

It was probably a month from the time in which the incidents of the last chapter occurred, that Mr. Wilkins dropped into the shop of old Mr. Hardamer. After a conversation of some ten or fifteen minutes on the ordinary topics of the day, the former said:

"I've been thinking for the last week, or so, of making a proposition to you."

"Well, what is it?" said Mr. Hardamer.

"I don't know what you will think of it," replied the other, "but it strikes me, if we were to unite our shops, it would be better for both of us."

"Why, as to that," said Mr. Hardamer, "I don't know what to say. I have never thought of any thing of the kind; but, as you have, suppose you state some of the advantages."

"Well, they are just there, as I think," replied Mr. Wilkins. "My shop is larger and a better stand than yours. Your custom is not half what it would be, if you were where I am, and mine is hardly enough to justify my expenses. If we join, your custom will, I am sure, double, and mine cannot fall off; so that it must be advantageous to both of us. I could then do all of the out-doors' work, which would be a relief to you, of course. And the business would not then suffer while I was away from the shop."

"That all seems to look very well," said Mr. Hardamer, "and, at first sight, it seems to me that such an arrangement would be advantageous to both of us. Still, I should like to turn it over in my mind for a few days."

"That, of course, you ought to do," said Mr. Wilkins.

"By Saturday, I will give you an answer, one way or the other," said Mr. Hardamer, "and, in the mean time, do you look at the subject in every possible light."

On Saturday, Mr. Wilkins called in again, when Mr. Hardamer said—

"Well, I have thought a good deal of your proposition, since you were here, and the more I think about it, the better I like it. My own affairs are assuming a brighter aspect, and I know your business to be good. And let me say to you, Mr. Wilkins, that there is no man

in the business with whom I would have any connection, except yourself."

"I thank you, warmly, for your good opinion," replied Mr. Wilkins. "I have, too, thought much of the subject since I mentioned it to you, and see no reason for not entering, as soon as each one of us can suitably arrange his own business, into the co-partnership. And this matter in a fair way of settlement, I might as well say to you, that, if you have no objections, I should be pleased to form with you a closer alliance. I like your daughter Geneva."

"And if she likes you, why there's an end of the matter," said Hardamer, with a broad smile of satisfaction, which he could not conceal.

That evening, Mr. Wilkins called in to see Geneva, as he was now in the habit of doing almost every day, and Mr. and Mrs. Hardamer left them, as usual, alone. Gertrude was ensconced in her chamber, in no very amiable mood, a place of refuge from the presence of Mr. Wilkins, which she did not fail to seek whenever that gentleman was announced.

"I've got a letter here from Genevieve," said Mr. Hardamer to his wife, after they were alone, drawing from his pocket the welcome epistle.

"Indeed!" ejaculated Mrs. Hardamer, with pleased surprise—"then read it, for I am very anxious to hear from her."

Mr. Hardamer put on his spectacles, and after unfolding the letter, read:—

"MY DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER.—Four pleasant weeks have hurried by, like so many days; and now I must lay aside every thing and write to you, for I know that you are very anxious to hear from your child. Four weeks! It does not seem possible that it is so long since I left you. But happy days pass swiftly. I have found Mr. Anderson's mother every thing that my heart could desire. She loves him with a yearning tenderness, and has received me as if I were her own child. Mr. Anderson has two sisters, one of them married, and away from home; the other, single, and with us. She is a good girl, and seems to delight in any thing that pleases either her brother or myself. I never saw a family where there was such harmony and good feeling existing between all the members. Mr. Anderson, who, although he has no diploma, has a license from some medical college, intends practising medicine in this county, and has given notice to that effect. He seems to be very much liked here; although he was formerly, as you know too well, very wild and inconsiderate. Already, he has had several calls, and the neighbors say that he will do well.

"Mr. Illerton's father lives close by us, and Anne spent a whole month with them. She

has just gone home. They were all delighted with her. She promised me that she would call and see you;—I hope she will, frequently, for I know you will like her very much; and she will be of so much use to Geneva, who, I sincerely hope, is still trying to do right. Speak to her affectionately from me, and tell her, that, only by perseverance in the good way she has entered, can she possibly find happiness."

* * * * *

"Heaven bless her!" said the old man, wiping his eyes, as he finished reading the letter from which the above is an extract—"She's no happier than she deserves to be."

After a brief pause, to collect her thoughts and feelings, Mrs. Hardamer said—

"I have, too, a little pleasant news. Mr. Wilkins has offered himself to Geneva."

"I'm a little ahead of you, there," replied Mr. Hardamer, smiling. "He has made proposals to me for her hand; and, besides that, we have agreed to go into business together."

"Why, when did all that happen?" exclaimed Mrs. Hardamer, in surprise and pleasure.

"It all happened to-day. And a good day's business I should call it," said Mr. Hardamer, a little proudly.

Sometime within a month from that evening, a small wedding party assembled at Mr. Hardamer's. Among those present, and as pleased as any, were Isaac Wilson, and little Jimmy. Both were neatly dressed, and both wore cheerful countenances. From the quiet, happy face of this newly wedded child, the old man's eyes often turned to those of his only two apprentices, and an occasional sad thought would cross his mind, as memory called up the forms of two others, who might have been there, and as cheerful, too, if he had extended to them that care and watchful regard which a master should always have over his apprentices. But he banished such thoughts as quickly as possible. Gertrude forced herself, from pride and maidenly shame, to appear pleased. She kissed the cheek of her sister, after the ceremony was performed; but the act was not from love. It was only for the eyes of others. In her heart she cherished feelings towards Geneva so nearly allied to hate, that, if they could have been separated from all associated affections, and presented to her in their true character, she would have been startled at their hideous deformity. Ever and anon, as her eye would rest upon the happy face of her sister, and then glance from it to the manly countenance of her husband, would she feel fresh pangs of jealous indignation. But Geneva was too much absorbed in her own delight, to perceive that any one present was disturbed. She was even deceived by her sister's manner towards her, and fondly thought, that she, too, had seen her error

and had resolved to cultivate kinder and gentler sympathies. But we turn away from the pleasant scene, in which was but one troubled heart, and that one troubled because evil thoughts and desires were cherished.

The new and brighter aspect which affairs had now assumed, had the effect to encourage the heart of Mrs. Hardamer. She, too, like her husband, could not help glancing back, and, in noting the changes of a year, she found the words again recurring to her thoughts; 'Sweet are the uses of adversity.' The troubles and disappointments which she had experienced had been wonderfully effective in tearing the scales from her eyes. And, now that there seemed to have come the dawn of a better day, her resolutions to perform all known duties were strengthened, because, in the new light which had broken upon her mind, she saw, clearly, that only in the way of duty could there be true happiness. Never, until recently, since her children were babes, had she found as much pleasure as pain in their company. Her own, as well as their unhappy tempers, had created a condition of things the very opposite of domestic tranquillity. But the example of Genevieve had done a great deal towards correcting much that was wrong in the disposition of her three younger sisters.

The gradual process of change which had been going on in Mrs. Hardamer's own mind, also had its good effect. And, since Genevieve had tried to put away some of her evils, there had been a different sphere pervading her whole family—a sphere which none but Gertrude could resist—and her resistance was becoming every day more feeble, because she found it a vain resistance. And, with this wonderful change, both Mr. and Mrs. Hardamer saw that a condition of wordly prosperity was also opening before them. But, affliction had done its legitimate office. They no longer looked to riches and to the privileges of wealth as the true sources of happiness. A state of freedom from evil affections, bringing internal peace, they perceived to be the only state truly desirable. With this, riches would prove a blessing; without it, a curse.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CONCLUSION.

THE double co-partnership formed by Mr. Wilkins, none of the parties had cause to regret. His wife, still persevered in her efforts to act

from higher principles than the mere selfish ones that had ruled her so long, and which, she was pained to perceive, continued to rule her sister Gertrude. The business had increased, since he and Mr. Hardamer joined their shops, even more than either of them had anticipated. Work came in upon them with a rapidity and steadiness that made it necessary, in a few months, to nearly double their force. In the present was cheerfulness and contentment, and in prospect a high degree of prosperity.

Leaving, now, the different members of this family to act out in their legitimate spheres, their several duties, we will briefly sketch an incident or two in the lives of some other characters introduced in the course of the story, and then assign the whole to the reader. It was, probably, about twelve months from the time of Genevieve's marriage, that a man of dissipated appearance, though perfectly sober, applied at the shop of Messrs. Hardamer & Wilkins for work. The trade was brisk and hands in demand, and so the journeyman was promptly seated. He gave his name as Wilson. There was little in his appearance that was prepossessing, for he was miserably clad, and his countenance indicated the free indulgence of sensual passions. Still, he did not seem to be a bold transgressor, for he rarely joined in the conversation of the shop; and he certainly showed a disposition to reform, at least, one bad habit, for he resolutely refused to touch any kind of intoxicating drink. Gradually his looks improved, and after he had obtained new clothes, he presented quite the appearance of a respectable man. Still, he went out but little, and always seemed to be thinking about something that troubled him.

"Come, Wilson, let's have a plate of oysters and some brandy punch," said one of the journeymen to him, on a Saturday evening. "It does one good, now and then, to indulge a little."

"No, I would rather not," said Wilson.

"() nonsense, come along! I believe you're actually afraid to drink," urged the other, with a slight expression of ridicule. "If the truth was known, it would be found, I expect, that you are an old bruiser at the bottle, and are afraid to touch it for fear of getting drunk."

"I expect it would," replied Wilson, gravely, while a shade of sadness flitted over his countenance.

"Then you wont go with me?" said his fellow journeyman.

"No, indeed, that I will not!" responded Wilson, positively. "A burnt child, they say, dreads the fire."

"Well, you can do as you like," said the other—"but, thank fortune! I am man enough to drink when I please, and leave off when I please."

Wilson did not reply, and the other went out, leaving him alone with Isaac.

"Well, I'm glad you didn't go," said Isaac, warmly, after the tempting and ridiculing journeyman had gone out. "I never have felt like touching any kind of liquor since I saw my old fellow-apprentice, Bill Grimes, turn to mixing it for negroes and dirty blackguards, in Washington."

"Were you ever at Washington, Isaac," asked Wilson, with evident interest.

"Yes, I was there once, and I don't care if I never see the place again."

"Why so, Isaac?"

"Because, if I must tell you, I was once fool enough to run away from my master, and foot it all the way to Washington. And a sorry time enough I had of it. Nobody would give me any work, and I believe I should have died if it hadn't been for one of the best old women in the world, over in Georgetown, who took me in and acted towards me just like a mother."

"You were fortunate in that part of your adventure, certainly," remarked Wilson, shading his eyes with his hand and looking Isaac intently in the face. "What was the kind old woman's name?"

"Her name was Mrs. Armor," replied Isaac.

"Mrs. Armor," repeated the journeyman, in a mechanical and abstracted tone. Then seeming to rouse himself he said—

"And so she was kind to you?"

"Indeed she was. She took me into her house, and kept me while I was sick and had nothing to do, and though she was very poor herself, never seemed to begrudge me any thing. And when I couldn't get no work in Georgetown, she gave me money enough to take me to Fredericksburg, where there was a seat of work vacant."

The journeyman still sat shading his eyes with his hand, but did not reply, and Isaac continued—

"One reason why she was so good to me, I believe, was because she had a son who had left his master and gone off; she didn't know where, for she said she hadn't heard from him in a good many years. How she seemed to love that son! Not a day passed that she didn't speak of him, and wonder where he was, and what he was doing. She said she never would die in peace until she had seen him; but sometimes she would talk about his being dead, and then the tears used to roll down her cheeks in great drops."

A sound, as of a sob, checked Isaac in his narration, and he looked up inquiringly into the journeyman's face; but the shadow from his hand concealed its expression, and defied the keen glance of the boy. But, somehow or other, he did not feel inclined to say more, and no further questions being asked him, he remained silent.

On the next morning, Wilson applied to Mr. Hardamer to be paid off, and left the shop with about thirty dollars in his possession, a new suit of clothes on his back, and making in all respects a very decent appearance to what he did when he applied three months before for work.

Late in the afternoon of the same day, he descended from a stage that drove up to Gadsby's Hotel, in Washington, and, stepping off at a quick pace up the avenue, was soon passing over towards Georgetown. The sun was just setting as he reached the elevated ground by the President's house, which gave him a full view of the heights of Georgetown, and, heaving a sigh he hurried on with a quickened pace.

In fifteen minutes he stood before a small and poor looking dwelling, at the upper end of the town, and, with a flushed face, and agitated frame, knocked at the door. It was opened by an old woman, who looked him inquiringly in the face.

"Does Mrs. Armor live here?" he said.

"Yes, sir, that is my name," she replied.

"Will you walk in?"

He entered at once, and Mrs. Armor closed the door.

"And so you don't know me, mother?" he said, while his voice trembled and his whole frame shook with emotion.

"John!—my son! O, is it you?" exclaimed Mrs. Armor, suddenly, lifting her eyes and hands, and then throwing her arms around his neck.

"Yes, mother, it is your erring son at last returned," he said, giving way to tears.

"Heaven be praised!" ejaculated the mother, looking upwards, as she withdrew her arms from the neck of her son, and clasped her hands together.

* * * * *

It was a little over ten years from the time the incidents mentioned in the last chapter occurred, that four men were seated at a table, in a drinking house in the vilest part of New Orleans, playing cards. They appeared to be strangers. One of them was a sailor, and almost every word he uttered was coupled with some disgusting expletive, or shocking oath. The other three seemed to be boatmen, and it was at once evident that they were men of wicked principles and bad hearts. All four were more than half drunk; and yet exhibited a keen desire to win from each other. The sailor lost frequently, and at every failure of his luck, he swore more and more bitterly. At last he threw down a five dollar note, his last money. In a few minutes it passed over to the pile of cash along side of the man who sat next to him.

"If you can beat me, or cheat me, I can whip you!" cried the sailor, as his last note vanished, springing from the table, and thrusting his clenched fist into the face of the man who had won from him.

Quick as thought a knife glanced in the dim light of the shop, and in the next moment the blood gushed from the side of the sailor. He fell with a groan to the floor. The individual who had stabbed him, coolly replaced his knife, and looked on with a drunken and indifferent stare, while others attempted to stop the flow of blood.

"Who is he? Does any one know?" was asked by many voices.

"Ask him his name!" cried another, "while he is able to speak."

"Who are you? What is your name?" was shouted in the ear of the wounded man.

"Thomas Peters," he replied in a feeble tone.

"Tom Peters!" ejaculated the individual who had committed the rash and murderous deed, pressing forward, and bending over to catch a glimpse of the face of the man. A single glance sufficed him. In the next moment he glided from the house, and hurried to the residence of a physician.

On the arrival of that individual at the scene of blood, he proceeded to examine into the condition of the wounded man, and soon ascertained that the stab he had received was not mortal. No effort was made to arrest the individual who had committed the act, for all in that den of evil spirits felt a sympathy for any one who had become amenable to law. The physician, after dressing the wound, and giving the necessary directions, hurried away; for he hardly felt that his life was safe a moment among the wretches that crowded the room.

After he was gone, the individual who stabbed Peters—the reader's old acquaintance Tom—gave directions to have him removed to a chamber, and provided for at his expense. During the whole night he sat by the bedside of the man whose life he had attempted, sometimes listening to his feeble breathing, sometimes fixing his eyes long and sadly upon the pale face of the insensible sleeper, and sometimes resting his head upon his hand, for an hour at a time, in sad and painful thought.

Towards daylight, Peters became sensible for the first time since the affray, and looked about him wildly.

"What's the matter? Where am I?" he said, with an imprecation, attempting to rise. But he sunk back upon his pillow, at once exhausted.

"You made a narrow escape, Tom Peters! —But you are safe now," said the individual who had been watching beside him through the night.

"Who are you, ha! that calls me Tom Peters?" replied the wounded man, turning a quick and searching glance upon his companion.

"Don't you know me, Tom?" said that individual, rising to his feet, and placing himself so that the light of the dim lamp would fall upon his face.

"I think I know your voice. But that is not the face, surely, of Bill Grimes," responded Peters, in surprise.

"It may be very much changed from what it was, Tom, but still it is the face of Bill Grimes, your old fellow apprentice, and none other."

"Then we are both a little the worse for wear, I'm thinking. But who was it that stabbed me, ha?"—And Peters launched a volley of curses at the head of the murdering villain, as he called him, who had attempted his life.

"I stabbed you, Tom," said the other. "But you roused the devil in me by insinuating that I cheated you, and then rubbing your fist in my face. I didn't know it was you, or I'd cut my hand off before I would have harmed a hair of your head. But the doctor says you are not dangerous, and I hope you'll soon be well."

"Well, here's my hand, Bill," said Peters, stretching out his arm with a feeble effort. "A sailor never bears malice, and is always true to an old friend."

The other took the proffered hand and grasped it with a feeling of warm friendship.

After Thomas Peters' recovery, neither he nor Grimes exhibited any disposition to recede from their advance position of wickedness. They attached themselves to each other, in a kind of evil fraternity, and followed after the evil delights of their hearts with a zest that gave little room to hope for any future salutary change. And, it is much to be doubted if any such change ever took place. It is possible, by a long course of wickedness, to extinguish the remains of good in the mind, whereby we are elevated out of a love of evil, into a desire for good. And it is to be feared that Thomas Peters and William Grimes thus extinguished their remains of good, and were brought entirely under the control and guidance of spirits of evil.

It is needless for the writer of this story to point out its moral. He deems it so plain, that that those who run may read.

THE END.

THE
DEBTOR'S DAUGHTER;
OR,
LIFE AND ITS CHANGES.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

AUTHOR OF "MARY MORETON; OR, THE BROKEN PROMISE," "LOVE IN HIGH LIFE," "LOVE IN A COTTAGE," "AGNES; OR, THE POSSESSED, A REVELATION OF MESMERISM," "INSUBORDINATION; OR, THE SHOEMAKER'S DAUGHTERS," "LUCY SANFORD, A STORY OF THE HEART," ETC., ETC.

COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME.

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THE DEBTOR'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER I.

THE year had waned until but a few hours were left. Evening came softly down, and the stars looked forth and sparkled in the cloudless sky. On the street were hundreds of light-hearted pedestrians, young and old; while gayer parties swept fleetly past, inspired by the jingle of merry bells. Within doors were brighter scenes. Family re-unions, social parties, and the gathering together of happy children. We will present one of these scenes to the reader's mental vision.

In the handsomely furnished parlor of a thrifty merchant named Herman Links, were assembled as gay a little company as could be found in the city. It consisted of the Merchant's wife and their children, with their attendants, and one or two near relatives. The oldest child of Mr. Links was a boy in his fourteenth year, and the youngest a bright little fellow of four, still called "the baby." Between these was a daughter named Clara, who was twelve years of age. A happier family of children could hardly be found; nor any in whom their parents had more pleasure.

The children were assembled in the parlor, as had been the custom of their parents on the recurrence of New Year's Eve, for purposes of mirth and festivity. Presents for each were provided; and also an entertainment of ices, fruits and confectionary. Plays, music and dancing were introduced to give zest and variety to the scene of enjoyment.

"For the many blessings that are showered upon us," said the mother, as she gazed upon her happy children, "how deeply should we be thankful! My heart is full to-night."

There was a tremor in her voice, and tears glistened in her eyes.

This was spoken to her husband; who made no answer in words; though he smiled an assent. Had he uttered what was in his heart, he would have given thanks to his own shrewdness, close dealing and intelligence as a merchant, for the blessings so freely scattered along his way through life.

"Dear children!" murmured the happy mother, as her eyes followed them about the room, lingering now on their beautiful young faces, and now watching their graceful motions as they whirled around each other in the dance. "Dear children! If life were all a

sunny time like this! If there were to come no clouds, nor storms, nor winter."

"Why do you think of clouds and storms and winter," asked Mr. Links, half chidingly.

"They come to all in passing through life."

"They will not come to us, I hope," replied the husband, with confidence.

"Why should our flock escape?"

"Because their shepherd is more watchful in guarding them from danger than the shepherds of many other flocks."

"I do not understand you," said Mrs. Links.

"Don't you dear? You are dull to-night," replied the merchant smiling.

"Perhaps I am. But, you will assist my dull ears by an explanation."

"I call myself the shepherd of this flock," said Mr. Links, affecting to speak lightly, though he was earnest in his heart. "And I think myself fully able to guard it from the wolves of adversity."

"Oh!"

Mrs. Links smiled and shook her head.

"Go on and be happy," said Mr. Links. "Enjoy the sunshine, the flowers and the fruits so freely scattered around. Let not your heart be troubled about the future. I will see that no adverse changes come."

"Riches take to themselves wings. So the Bible warns us," returned the wife.

"True. But they fly away from those only who fail to clip or fetter their wings. I have no fear of such a winged demonstration in my coffers."

"I don't like to hear you speak so," returned Mrs. Links, seriously. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof. Whom He will He setteth up, and whom He will He casteth down."

"Your heart is superstitious, dear," said Mr. Links. "I do not believe as firmly as you appear to, in the particular interference of Providence in the affairs of men. People lay a great deal of blame at the door of Providence for their misfortunes; when they might with far more propriety, take the credit of it to themselves. I've lived long enough to begin to understand pretty clearly the theory of success and failure in life. Men make their own external condition. I have made mine by industry, shrewdness and tact; when others were asleep or enjoying themselves, I was thinking, and scheming and working. Suppose I had been careless and unthrifty; would I have grown rich? Certainly not! Understanding, as I do, the means of success; it is not surprising that I should understand how to retain my advantage. Give yourself no trouble on this account, Margaret. All will come out right. Trust me for that."

"You cannot keep away death nor sickness."

"Those are evils against which human foresight may not always guard; when they come, we must only bear them with christian for

titude. But why, Margaret, cloud this happy season by gloomy thoughts. Let us enjoy the present; that is the way to be thankful for all our blessings. Sufficient unto the days is the evil thereof."

With an effort Mrs. Links sought to dispel the clouds which had come dimly over the bright horizon; and soon the sky was clear again. There was too much contagion in the atmosphere she was breathing to leave her free from the infection of joy. The shadow fell suddenly, and quickly passed away; like the shadow of a bird upon a sunny stream.

So full of all the good things of life money could procure, was the lap of this family, that few thoughts went beyond their threshold in sympathy with others who were less favored by worldly fortune.—They were happy in and from themselves, and cared not for others. So far as Mr. Links was concerned, his thought of those who were in poorer circumstances, was mingled with contempt. It was all, in his view, their own fault, and they deserved the evils incident to their condition.

Not far from the residence of Mr. Links were assembled another family; or, rather, a portion of another family—for one was absent, and that one the husband and father. He was a Merchant, named Manly Wilkins.

The parlor in which Mrs. Wilkins sat with her three children, was lit by a single gas lamp, and the little group were seated on a sofa which had been wheeled near to the glowing grate. No entertainment had been prepared for the little ones; there was no music, no dancing, no loud ringing of happy voices; for he whom all loved was absent, and they were not willing to be glad, even, until he returned.

"Why does father stay out so late?" said Grace, the oldest child, who was just entering her thirteenth year.

"I'm sure I cannot tell. He sent word that he would not be home at tea time; but it is nearly nine o'clock now. Business has probably detained him."

"Oh, I wish he would come home! I don't want to go to bed until I kiss him," spoke out little Mary. "I'm so sleepy!"

"I wouldn't sit up any longer, dear," said the mother. "It may be an hour yet before he comes home."

"An hour? oh, that is so long," murmured Edwin, the youngest, who gaped as he spoke. "What does keep him so long?"

In a little while afterwards, Edward, who was only six years old, fell off to sleep and was removed to his bed by the nurse who was called in for the purpose. Mary soon followed, and Grace was left alone with her Mother.

Ten o'clock came, and still Mr. Wilkins was absent.

"Where can father be?" said Grace, rising and going to the window, where she stood looking out upon the still thronged street. "I wish he would come home."

"He has some business to attend to, which, no doubt, keeps him later than he wishes to stay," replied the Mother. "You had better go to bed, dear. I will remain up until his return."

Grace sat half an hour later with her mother, and then went up to her room. The one they waited for was still absent.

And where was Mr. Wilkins?

In making some hurried estimates, during the day, in regard to his business, which was not going on altogether to his satisfaction, the merchant came to a result that startled and alarmed him. When evening fell, instead of returning home as usual, he remained in his counting room alone, and began a series of careful investigations into the state of his affairs. This was continued hour after hour, the time passing unnoted, until he paused over the final result, and heard the clock strike twelve.

"Deceived! Deceived!" he exclaimed in strong agitation, "I had hoped to find some error on the right side; but, none, alas! appears. And is it thus I begin the new year? My wife! my little ones! How hard will it be for you! This will be the wormwood in my cup. For myself, I could meet adversity without a fear; but I cannot bear the thought of change for the cherished ones of my pleasant home."

For many minutes the unhappy man leaned his face down upon the desk at which he had been sitting, searching in vain for some way of escape from the approaching disaster; but none was presented.

Mr. Wilkin's losses during the year had been very heavy; still, he believed himself to be perfectly solvent, and able not only to meet all his engagements, but to go on and make up, during the coming year, more than all he had lost in this. But, the actual state of his business, as presented by figures, showed him to be not only crippled, but so much crippled that it would be impossible to go on for more than a few months longer. For some time he had found it difficult to make his payments; being forced to borrow a good deal, and also to suffer heavy discounts on paper. Still, he had no suspicion that his affairs were desperate. The certainty that it was so, came upon him like the shock of a heavy blow.

It was midnight when the Merchant reached his home. The instant his wife saw him, she perceived that something was wrong.

"Where have you been so late?" she enquired anxiously.

"At the store," he replied briefly.

"What is the matter? You look pale and troubled. Is anything wrong?"

"Yes, dear," replied Mr. Wilkins, in a low voice. He spoke low that he might not betray his agitation.

"What? What?" eagerly enquired Mrs. Wilkins.

"I find myself, most unexpectedly, in great embarrassment."

"My husband!" Mrs. Wilkins laid her hand upon him, and drew instinctively close to his side.

"I have met during the year, with many severe losses; but, though I felt them, I still believed that I had suffered no serious injury. In this, it now appears, I was mistaken. They were too heavy for me, and I am about to be borne under."

"Do not say that, my husband! Hope for a better result than this."

"We cannot hope in the face of the most conclusive evidence. I have this night completed a searching investigation into my business, and the result is, a knowledge of the fact that I am hopelessly insolvent. Painful as all this is, the pain finds tenfold increase in the thought that the consequences will pass from myself to others. If the evil were to be borne alone, I could bear it. But it must fall heaviest upon you and our little ones. Into this dear nest of love will come the hand of the spoiler."

A strong shudder passed through the frame of Mr. Wilkins, as he said this.

"Do not think of us now," quickly replied his wife, drawing her arm about his neck. "We want no good in this world beyond what we can share with you. As for myself I can say that

'— Grief divided with thy heart,
Were better far than joy apart.'

Our lives are bound up together; and we can be happy under any external condition."

"But our children! What will they not lose?"

"They cannot lose our love and care, my dear husband! These make their greatest good."

"But they will lose those advantages that wealth alone can procure. Oh, to see them pushed out from the circle in which we move and thrust down lower! My heart aches at the thought."

"And may not that thought spring from a weakness? But, do not pain yourself now by looking at these consequences. Turn yourself to your business, and let all your thoughts centre there for the present. This is needful in so great a crisis. Do the best you can without regarding us. When the end comes, even if all be lost, you will still have a wife and three children to love you, and to keep close by your side, cheerfully treading the path you walk in, even if it be along a rough and desert way."

Mr. Wilkins was touched by the words of his wife. He had expected to see her cast down to the very earth. But, not a tear had come to her eyes; nor had a quivering lip betrayed the sinking spirit.

"God bless you!" said he with emotion, "for such words of encouragement. They come to my sinking heart and bear it above the waters."

"There is one thing for which we can be thankful," replied Mrs. Wilkins. "Adversity will not separate, but drive us closer together; and, in mutually sustaining each other in the trials through which we may have to pass, we will make them lighter. And now, dear husband! let me say to you, once for all. In your present difficulties, think no more of us. On your head will come the first shock of tempest, while we are safely shut up at home untouched by its fury. Upon you must fall the mortification of a blasted credit, so dreadful to a man of right feelings; and still worse, the pain of seeing loss fall upon others, if your property should not prove sufficient to meet your obligations. I can imagine some little of what you will have to suffer in the ordeal you are about to enter. Would that I could pass through it with you, and bear half the pain!"

"My dear wife!" exclaimed Mr. Wilkins, "How my heart blesses you for these words! You *will* stand by my side in this ordeal, and take away half the pain I would otherwise suffer. Already my failing heart is sustained. The heavy hand that has seemed to press for hours upon my bosom, is no longer there, impeding my free respiration. Let the storm break, I will find shelter."

"Yes, let it come! There is One above who rules the storm; and He will not let it bear upon us too heavily. He cares for our children with a love that is tenderer than our own—and Wisdom is the form of that Love. Good to them and to us, let us believe, will spring from what now seems evil."

"Talk to me thus," said Mr. Wilkins, "when you see me sinking amid the trials I am about to encounter. It will do me good. It will keep me above the rushing waters."

The heart of the embarrassed merchant beat with even pulses, as he laid his head upon his pillow that night, and the sleep that followed was sweet and refreshing. In the morning he went forth to meet the good and ill in store for him; and, though his heart faltered at times and trembled, yet his mind did not lose its rational equipoise.

CHAPTER II.

"MANLY protested! Impossible!"

"It is true, sir. I saw the notary in at Weston's."

"Some oversight perhaps."

"That is possible."

"How much of his paper have we?"

The clerk to whom this was said, referred to the Bill Book of the house, and after a brief examination, replied.

"Ten thousand dollars."

"So much?"

"Yes sir."

"I did not suppose it was over five thousand."

"He has bought heavily of late. His last bill was nearly three thousand dollars."

"And made last week!"

"Yes."

"The goods are all delivered and the notes taken?"

"Oh, yes."

"Protested? That looks bad."

"He's been hard run for money during the last two or three months," said the clerk.

"Ah? How did you hear this?"

"They told me so at Weston's."

"Indeed! What do they think of this protest?"

"That it is a failure."

"Are they in to any amount?"

"About as much as we are."

"Well; all I have to say is, that if Wilkins have failed, he's a rogue, and he'll get no quarters from me. A man who will buy three thousand dollars worth of goods from a single house, just on the eve of smashing up, is a scamp."

"Men struggle, sometimes, Mr. Links," said the clerk, who had once failed in business himself, "up to the day they stop payment, in the hope of meeting all their engagements. It is hardly just to pronounce a man a rogue who tries to do right, and only ceases his struggles when all his strength is exhausted."

"All that is well enough said," replied Mr. Links—for it was this gentleman we have here introduced—"and may apply in some cases. But, it wont apply here."

While he was yet speaking, a lad came in and handed him a note. It desired his attendance, on the next morning, at a meeting of the creditors of Manly Wilkins.

"So he has gone by the board, sure enough!" said Mr. Links, in a growling voice, as he tossed the note from him. "I am invited to a meeting of his creditors. I will be there, depend on it. Herman Links is never absent on these interesting occasions. And if he don't give Mr. Manly Wilkins something to dream over for the next twelve months, he's mistaken; that's all!"

"And so Wilkins has gone by the board," said Mr. Links, on meeting a mercantile friend an hour afterwards.

"Oh no! Surely not!" was replied.

"Too true sir." And Mr. Links, compressed his lips and frowned ominously.

"I thought him perfectly solvent."

"So did I; and honest too."

"Honest!" said the other with some evidence of surprise.

"Yes; I say honest!" replied Links, sharply.

"Will he not be able to show a fair statement?"

"He bought three thousand dollars worth of goods from me last week. That does not look very well."

"I sold him day before yesterday."

"You did!"

"Yes."

"And do you suppose," said Mr. Links, "that Wilkins didn't know at the time he made the bill that he was insolvent?"

"I shall wait until I see his statement before I come to any conclusions against him," replied the other. "In all my dealings with him, I never saw any thing that would lead me to doubt his integrity."

"As for me, I never thought a great deal of him," replied Links, "and I only wonder that I was the fool to let him get into me so deeply. But, if he gets off with his plunder, he will be a good deal smarter than I think him."

"Your judgment is too hasty in this matter," was answered. "In most cases of mercantile embarrassment, our utmost charity is needed."

"I grant you that," said Links. "Charity for those who have all the loss to bear."

"No; charity for him who fails. He loses every thing, the others only a part; and, in most cases, a part that gives no pain in the removal. The creditor, loses not a single domestic comfort. The loss reaches no member of his household. All goes on with him, as if no disaster had occurred. But, the unhappy debtor is stripped of every thing; and his family, raised, it may be in luxury, driven out of their pleasant home and from among a cherished circle of friends, to sink into obscurity and want. Ah sir! When I hear that a man has failed, my first thought is one of pity for his family."

"And *my* first thought," replied Links, with a strange pride in his own want of sympathy with the unfortunate, "is whether I hold any of his paper."

"Do you not think of his family?" asked the mercantile friend. "Do you never ask yourself how you would feel were you in so painful a condition?"

"No sir! I never mean to be in such a condition. My regard for my family leads me to avoid all mistakes in business. I never speculate; nor run risks; nor make false calculations. I see to my own affairs narrowly, and leave other people to take care of theirs. When a man who owes me fails, I see that the loss is as small as possible; and, if I am satisfied that he has been acting badly, I show him no quarters."

"Why should you persecute a fallen man, even if he have erred too widely?"

"I go for the moral effect in business circles. Make a man feel, to the full extent, the consequences of his own acts, and it will prove a warning to others likely to fall into the same position. Moreover, when a man cheats me—and he who buys my goods one day and fails the next, is a cheat—I have an account to settle with him which I never let run a day longer than I can help. You will be at the meeting to-morrow of course."

"Oh yes."

"I trust you will come prepared to do your duty as a merchant."

"And you as a man," was answered.

The two men separated.

"Is it true," asked Mrs. Links of her husband, when the latter came home in the evening, "that Mr. Wilkins has failed in business?"

"Too true," replied the merchant, in a sober voice. His brows contracted as he spoke.

"Oh, I am so sorry!" fell from the lips of Mrs. Links in a tone of sympathy.

"And so am I," returned her husband, for he owes me ten thousand dollars."

"So much? But you will not lose it all?"

"I trust not." There was a kind of menace in the tone with

which this was uttered. "Wilkins has not acted honestly; of that I am well satisfied; and I shall hold him to a strict account."

"That pains me worst of all," said Mrs. Links. "Poor Mrs. Wilkins! I could bear anything except to have the good name of my husband tarnished."

"I will blast his good name!" fell from the merchant's lips with an emphasis that caused the heart of his wife to bound with a single quick throb.

"Oh, say not that!" she returned in a pleading voice. "Spare him for the sake of his family."

"I cannot spare him, Margaret, on any plea. It is due to justice and the whole mercantile community, to expose fraud wherever it intrudes itself among us. And on this principle, I will expose every thing that is unfair in this man's business. As for his family; he is their protector, and should be their best friend. Their misfortune is in having such a protector and friend. It would be a weakness in me to let him escape through the mere impulse of pity for his family."

"Oh! it will be such a change for them!" murmured the wife, speaking partly to herself. "Such a change! Poor Mrs. Wilkins! I esteem her as one of the best of women; and she has a sweet family of children. Grace has sprung up into a lovely girl. Ah! When I see misfortune come upon a family like this, I think of how it would be with my own little ones were the pressure of adversity to fall upon us."

"Give yourself no trouble on that score," replied Mr. Links, a little impatiently. "I will take good care never to get into a condition like that of Wilkins."

"Sometimes our best intentions fail," remarked Mrs. Links.

"Good intentions are worth nothing, unless carried out with the requisite wisdom. There's too much good intention in the world, and too little good action."

"Even for men's weakness and inefficiency we should have charity," urged the wife.

"I don't know about that. This false charity that so much abounds, is only an inducement for men to be weak and inefficient. I have no idea of being compelled to drag along with me some half a dozen of such people. The moment I find them clinging to me, I throw them off to shift for themselves."

Mrs. Links argued no further with her husband. But her own views and feelings were not in the least changed by what he said.—All the evening she was silent and thoughtful. Poor Mrs. Wilkins! Her image was not a moment from before her mind.

CHAPTER III.

It required a strong effort on the part of Mr. Wilkin's to subdue the agitation towards which his mind was constantly tending, as the hour for meeting his creditors approached. Nothing but a feeling of integrity sustained him.

"I have not designed to wrong any one," he said to himself, as he felt his heart shrinking from the trial through which he was about to pass—"Why, then, should I fear to meet these men? Let a sense of rectitude bear me up; and fortitude enable me to endure the pain without a murmur."

With these words in his heart, the debtor entered the room where were assembled some twenty of his principle creditors. Some bowed to him formally; some recognized him with a smile; some took him cordially by the hand; and some looked at him with stern eyes and compressed lips.

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Wilkins. His voice was unsteady, and his lips trembled. "Gentlemen," he repeated forcing a more composed expression, although the words came deep from his throat. "I have called you together in order to place before you a statement of my affairs, which, I deeply regret to say, are seriously embarrassed. Many causes have tended to this; not the least effective of which have been losses through bad debts. Were it possible to collect all that is outstanding, I could show a handsome surplus. But, as this cannot be done; the deficit, I fear will be serious. For your benefit, I am prepared to make an assignment of every thing."

Mr. Wilkins would have said more; but the tremor in his voice returned; and, not wishing to display an unmanly weakness, he closed and sat down.

"Have you a statement, Mr. Wilkins?" asked one of the creditors.

"Oh, yes. And he drew forth a small package of papers and laid them on a table at which two or three were sitting. One of those present was appointed to read these papers aloud. After the reading there was a silence.

"A pretty full statement," remarked a gentleman

"Debts a hundred and twenty thousand dollars," said Mr. Links—"assets a hundred and seventy thousand, including fifty thousand bad and doubtful claims."

"That will leave cent per cent for creditors."

"Cent per cent!" growled Links. "You'll never see fifty cents on the dollar."

"Give me the settlement of the business, and I'll bring it so near to one hundred cents," said Mr. Wilkins, quickly, "that no creditor will feel that he has cause of complaint."

"No; I'll not agree to that," replied Links. "It is enough for me that a man once mismanages his business. If he is not able to

conduct it successfully, he will not be able to settle it to the best advantage."

Mr. Wilkins, who had risen, sat down instantly, while a slight palor overspread his face.

No one spoke for some moments. Some felt with Mr. Links, but, not knowing how many other were on their side, they did not feel bold enough to commit themselves to like sentiments. Others were hurt at the unkindness of the remark, as well as at the manner of its utterance; and the feelings of such went naturally to the side of the debtor.

"I am for whatever arrangement is best for all parties, Mr. Wilkins included," said one, breaking the silence that followed the words of Mr. Links.

"So am I," added another.

"And so am I," repeated a third.

"I don't see," remarked Links, "that Mr. Wilkins has any interest in the matter whatever. According to his own showing, there will not be enough to pay his debts. The property, therefore, is ours; and it is for us to get the most out of it we can. He says that he is ready to give up all. And I am ready to take him at his word, and take all."

"And fully release him from every obligation?" said a gentleman present.

Links compressed his lips quickly and shook his head.

"I didn't say that. How can I release a man from an obligation. If you owe me a dollar, you owe it; and the debt remains until the dollar is paid. An obligation is an obligation, and, until wiped off by a just return, remains in full force. Isn't this so?"

"We may relinquish any claim that we have against another," was replied to this.

"You may do so. But to me there is no abstract justice in the thing. If a man is your debtor he ought to pay the debt."

"Suppose he is not able to do so?"

"If not able in the present, he may be in the future. The obligation must for ever stand against him, and, if he is governed by an honest principle, he will pay it off in the end. This forgiving thousands and thousands of dollars, annually, in our city, by over-merciful creditors, is working greatly to the detriment of a healthy state of business. Men fill up every channel and avenue of trade, struggling against each other, diminishing prices and dividing business, with a recklessness about results that is astounding to a merchant of the good old school. If they succeed, well; if not, why they call a meeting of creditors, make an assignment of their bad debts and bad stock, get every body to sign off, and then begin the same thing over again. Now, gentlemen, I for one, am tired of this too oft repeated game of chance, played against my fair accumulations; and I mean to set a face of steel against it. I release no man who goes in debt to me."

"Your remarks, Mr. Links," said a friend of the debtor's "bear

unjustly upon Mr. Wilkins. He has played no such game as the one you censure."

"I don't know," muttered Links, in an undertone. "I'm not so sure of that."

The words reaching the ears of Mr. Wilkins, he arose instantly, and said with some warmth.

"I must beg leave to repel the gentleman's insinuations. I believe, that I have conducted my business as fairly and as honorably as any man in the city. And, as for a release from my obligations, I have not asked, nor do I intend asking that. If I live and have my health, I will pay up every cent that my property fails to divide. If not, the loss will have to be shared by my creditors."

"Our friend," remarked Mr. Links, rising as Mr. Wilkins sat down, and speaking in a tone which the latter felt to be insulting; "assumes that his business has been conducted on fair principles. From this view, I must beg to differ with him. We find, in this statement, some fifty thousand dollars of bad debts, some of them against men long known in the trade to be of doubtful credit—men who could only buy from those who were over-anxious to sell, and who were thus enabled to divide the business with good and substantial traders in various parts of the country."

"Name the men to whom you allude," said Mr. Wilkins.

Links took the debtor's statement from the table, and, after glancing over it, repeated the names of Parker and Krane.

"They owe twenty thousand dollars," said he. "Men to whom I refused credit four years ago!"

"Has any one here lost by this firm?" asked Wilkins.

"I lost by them," replied one

"And so did I," added another.

"When did they fail?" was enquired.

"Three months ago," answered Wilkins.

"I would have sold them up to the day I heard of their stoppage," remarked a gentleman, who had before said nothing.

"And you would have deserved to lose your bill;" retorted Mr. Links, in rather an ill-natured tone of voice.

"This is little better than trifling," said one of those present. "Let us come to the work on hand, and do it like men and christians; not like eager self-seekers and oppressors. A fellow merchant has fallen into difficulties, and we who are most interested in his affairs he calls together, and says, openly and honestly—'Gentlemen, I have met with losses which have embarrassed, and rendered it impossible for me to meet my payments. Here are my effects; I surrender all into your hands. I will not stand between you and a dollar that I have called my own.' Now, gentlemen, when a man who owes me does this, I am disarmed. If I lose by him, I am not angry. When I hear my child lisping the prayer so beautifully given in these lines—

'The mercy I to other's show,
That mercy show to me;'

I feel an instant desire to have implanted in my heart all humane principles. To be merciful as I would hope to obtain mercy from Him to whom we are all indebted beyond our ability to pay."

These words produced a strong effect, and were instantly responded to in a similar spirit by several of those who were present.

"Unless you desire me to remain," said Mr. Wilkins, at this time, "I will retire and leave you to discuss the whole matter in the most perfect freedom. Act, gentlemen, with a view to your own interests in this matter. I ask of you nothing but to believe that I have meant to do right."

No one expressing a wish to have him remain, Mr. Wilkins left the apartment, and returned to his place of business. An hour afterwards two gentlemen who had been appointed by the meeting, waited upon him for the purpose of ascertaining many particulars not fully explained in his statement, and also to confer with him about the winding up of his business.

"What has been done?" asked Mr. Wilkins, with a strong manifestation of interest.

"Nothing," was replied. "Some were for extending your time, that you might recover yourself, some for winding up the business, leaving it in your hands, as the agent of the creditors; and some for taking the assignment, and excluding you from all agency in the settlement. Mr. Links says that he, for one, will be satisfied with nothing less; and, there are a number who go with him.

"You must act as you think best," said the debtor, with a sinking in his voice. "Though I am well satisfied that if I were permitted to settle every thing I could make it pay much better than if placed in the hands of men who are strangers to my business, and who would have far less interest than myself in the result."

This was readily assented to by one of the men, but received coldly by the other. They represented the two opposite parties among the creditors. After obtaining all the information they sought, they went away.

On the next morning another meeting was held; but without arriving at a definite decision in regard to the debtor. His friends and those who thought a humane course the wisest and best, were strongly opposed by Mr. Links and those who, like him, narrowed down their views to the little circle of self-interest.

Finally, it was decided to accept the assignment offered, and to take the business out of Mr. Wilkins' hands. Then came up the question of a release for the debtor, who was present during the discussion that followed.

"I release no man," said Mr. Links, the moment it was proposed to free the debtor from all remaining obligations.

"In Heaven's name!" exclaimed a gentleman, when this remark was made. "Let us act towards a fellow man in misfortune as we would have others act towards us, were we in the same unhappy condition."

"When I get in such a condition, I'll ask no man to release me. Never will I stoop to that," said Mr. Links.

"Gentlemen," said the debtor, rising, "I thank such of you as meditate the kindness and consideration proposed, from the bottom of my heart. I have not asked this and I did not mean to ask it. But, I will deal frankly with you as to my purposes for the future. When I go out from here, I go out penniless and creditless. Possessing ability to do business, I will have no means to work with. Yet, will there still rest upon me the burden of a family. The natural wants of my wife and children I must supply as before. They will have the first claim upon my efforts, and I shall feel in duty bound to pay the claim. When that is done, if I have anything over, it will go to meet whatever deficit may remain after this business comes to a final settlement. If I am released from all legal obligation, I will be freer to enter into any business that may offer. I will have a chance to get on my feet again. If you believe me to be an honest man, it will be wise for you to release me; for then I will be better able to pay whatever remains to be paid."

"When my debt is paid, I will give a release, not before," replied Links to this. "I have set my face against this signing-off-system."

"It pains me to hear any man express such sentiments," said one of the creditors in answer to this. "It is always best to lean, if we lean at all, to the side of mercy."

"Gentlemen! All I have to say in this matter I have already said," retorted Links. "I will not sign a release until every dollar is paid. Mr. Wilkins stands my debtor, and as such, I will hold him. You can act perfectly free so far as your own interests are concerned; and I will do the same so far as mine are concerned. You can act upon your sympathy-system, and I will act according to my own views of right and wrong. And now, gentlemen, as I have others matters to see after, I will leave you."

And, with this he departed.

There were several who thought and felt with Mr. Links, though they were less ready to avow as boldly their sentiments. These raised many questions and doubts, and asked for a longer time to consider. The result was, an adjournment of the meeting without any decision of a matter so vital to the future well being of the debtor.—The spasmodic sympathy excited in his favor died gradually away from this time. His assignment was accepted, but no formal release followed, and as his friends came not forward to effect this important object for him, the debtor shrunk from any attempt to carry it through himself. And thus was he left a prey to any eager harpy of a creditor, who might happen to find him in possession of a dollar that he could wrest from him by legal process.

"You should see to this matter, Mr. Wilkins," urged one lukewarm friend and another.

"The creditors had the question before them, but did not grant the boon," was his only reply to this.

"But you may get a release if you go vigorously to work to obtain it." Might be still further urged.

"Do you think I can go to a man and ask him to forgive me a debt? No! My sense of obligation is too acute."

With such a reply Mr. Wilkins generally silenced all these suggestions

CHAPTER IV.

MR. LINKS had one virtue, or, rather the appearance of a virtue, for that of which we speak, was, in him, born of selfishness. He idolized his children; or, rather, worshiped himself as reproduced in them. Had the love he felt been a genuine, God-like affection, it would not have been accompanied, as it was, by such a hardness towards others.

To Mr. Links the centre of the whole world—nay, of the whole universe—was his own family; and he would have taxed the universe, had it been in his power, for their good.

When Mr. Links thought of the wives and children of his neighbors—when his imagination pictured by some strange chance, the fireside of another—a feeling of contempt accompanied the impression. None were so bright, none so worthy of consideration as his. He would talk of his own children; but listened impatiently if others spoke of their home-treasures.

On the day that Mr. Wilkins' assignment was accepted, and the unhappy debtor went home, as the evening came down, gloomily enough to him, Mr. Links also returned to meet the bright faces of his children and to find delight in the glad music of their young voices.

"Clara, dear," said Mr. Links to his oldest daughter, soon after his return, "what has happened? You look as sober as if you had lost your best friend."

Clara did not make any answer to this, but looked even more serious.

"Is any thing wrong, mother?" enquired Mr. Links, glancing towards his wife.

"She's put out on account of something that happened at school," replied the mother.

"Ah! What is wrong there, Clara?"

"Nothing of much consequence," was answered.

"I should say, judging from the expression of your face, that it was of a good deal of consequence," said Mr. Links.

"Some trouble with one of the girls," said Mrs. Links.

"Oh! Had a little tiff." And Mr. Links smiled.

"Not so very little," said Clara, with something indignant in her voice.

"Well, what is the matter, dear?" Mr. Links spoke kindly and with evident interest. "Who has offended you?"

"Grace Wilkins," replied Clara.

The brow of Mr. Links fell instantly.

"What Grace Wilkins? Not the daughter of that Manly Wilkins?"

"Yes sir."

"Indeed! And what had she to say or do to you, I should like to know?"

"She treated me to-day, I think, with great rudeness."

"In what respect?"

"Because I happened to miss my French and Spanish lessons, she laughed at me; and, I heard her say, in an under tone, to Edith Barbour, that I was the most stupid girl in school."

A flush of anger went instantly over the face of Mr. Links.

"And what did you do?" he enquired.

"I complained of her conduct to Mr. ———."

"That was right. Did he reprimand her?"

"No sir. He said that it was rude in Grace; but that I ought not to mind such things."

"Indeed! Upon my word, Mr. ——— is a philosopher! Not mind an insult! And I suppose Grace laughed at you twice as freely as before."

"No sir. She looked cut at being informed on, and tried to make a sort of an apology; but I told her that I wanted nothing more to do with her."

"That was right. When a creature like her wantonly insults you, have nothing more to do with her. But let me tell you one thing for your comfort; you will not be troubled much longer by the presence in your school of Grace Wilkins."

"Why not, father?" asked Clara, evincing more interest than the father thought natural under the circumstances.

"Her father has gone to the dogs, and will, of course, have to remove his daughter from so expensive a school."

"Oh, father! I'm sorry for that," replied Clara, the natural kindliness of her feelings instantly returning. "I'm very sorry."

"And so am I," said the Mother. "It grieves me, always, when I see children raised, as our own have been, suddenly deprived of every advantage of education. Oh! It is a loss beyond calculation."

"It will be no great loss I presume to a girl like this daughter of Wilkins," replied Mr. Links. "A rude, ill-mannerly creature as she seems to be, should be removed from association with genteel people."

"Oh, father! She is not rude and ill-mannerly," quickly spoke up Clara.

"Did she not insult you to-day?"

"Yes sir.—But—but—"

"But what, Clara?"

"I don't think she meant to do so."

"You don't."

"No sir."

"That is strange! She laughed at you, and called you the most stupid girl in the room. If that is not rude and insulting, I don't know what you call it."

"Perhaps, I saw and heard more than she intended me to see," said Clara.

"That is ; she was speaking ill and making sport of you, and you happened to detect her in the act?"

"I'm afraid, father," said Clara, her tone and manner altogether changed from what it was, "that I have, in giving way, suddenly, to angry feelings, been, in some, degree unjust to Grace."

"I'm sure it must be so," said Henry, the brother, who had not before made any remark on the subject.

"And pray why do you give this opinion?" retorted Mr. Links, turning sharply round to the lad.

"I never saw anything rude, or ill-natured in Grace," replied Henry.

"Nor I," said Mrs. Links. "I must say that in her favor."

"She has grossly insulted Clara to-day," rejoined Mr. Links.—"And that is enough for me. I would take Clara away instantly, only I like the school, and know that she will not be troubled much longer with Miss Wilkins."

"Do you think her father will be compelled to take her away?" asked Mrs. Links.

"Certainly I do. We've taken every thing out of his hands, and he is now upon the world without a dollar to bless himself."

"Oh, Herman! Herman! How could men have the heart to do such a thing?" said Mrs. Links, with much feeling.

"It is the fate of every one who mis-manages his business. A man who ruins himself and family has no claim upon the world.—He has marred his own fortune, and he and his family must bear the consequences."

"But," said Mrs. Links, "could not twenty men of wealth, by a little sacrifice in each individual case, sustain a fellow man in difficulty, instead of stripping him of every thing and sending him and his family forth naked upon the world?"

"If men in business," replied the husband, "were to attempt to hold up every fellow who couldn't stand upon his own legs, they would soon all be on their backs. You would make but a poor Merchant, Margaret."

"Perhaps, I would," said Mrs. Links, in a low voice that was touched with sadness.

"Women have too much feeling," continued Mr. Links, "for contact with the world at the points where is felt the strife of interest.—Every man, struggling to make his own way in life, comes to a certain extent in collision with those around him, and unless he be ever on the alert, will be thrown down. We must harden our hearts, if you will so call it, or we could accomplish nothing."

"If that be a truth," returned the wife, "it is a sad one, and speaks little in favor of human nature."

"As to human nature," said Mr. Links, "our preachers give us a very poor account of that. They say the heart is depraved and desperately wicked. This being so, what we see around us is no mystery. An honest merchant, let me tell you Margaret, has to be shrewd, watchful, and rigid in all his dealings, for there is scarcely a man

with whom he has any business intercourse who does not seek to overreach him. He must harden his heart, so to speak, against his fellow men, treating all, while doing business with them, as so many enemies who would compass his ruin to build themselves up, were it in their power to do so."

"What a picture!" ejaculated Mrs. Links.

"It is a true one." Responded her husband.

"Ah me!" sighed Mrs. Links, "if the effects of all the strife you speak of were confined to the strong men who can endure! But it is not so. Weak women and helpless children are the greatest sufferers in the end. They feel the shock of these collisions, when some one falls and is trampled to the earth, as now in the case of Mr. Wilkins. Just as the oldest daughter has reached an age when the higher and more important part of her education begins, misfortunes come and she is suddenly deprived of every advantage. Think, how we should feel to see our Clara thus wronged,—I say wronged; for that is a wrong which takes from any member of society the privilege of mental culture."

"Let us not make ourselves unhappy, Margaret, over the misfortunes of others," said Mr. Links. "Rather let us enjoy the good things of life in our possession and be thankful for them."

"I am ever thankful," returned the wife. "But, the good I enjoy does not harden my feelings towards others,—does not rob me of human sympathies. When we gather together in our happy home; how frequently do I think of those who are homeless. At the full table, I often think of those who are hungry. And when the fire blazes cheerfully and the storm roars without, my thoughts often turn to those who are homeless, or, with thin garments, crouch beside a few embers that give but little warmth."

"Margaret! Margaret! Why will you indulge such gloomy fancies?" said Mr. Links, smiling, yet serious in his tone of voice. "Most people have about as much of this world's good things as they deserve or would enjoy. The very subjects of your pity, are more contented than you imagine. How often do we hear it said, and with great truth, that happiness is about equally divided among all classes."

"No one can be happy in poor Mrs. Wilkins position," replied the wife. "How my heart aches for her!"

The tea bell ringing at the moment, interrupted the conversation, and the family passed from the parlor into the dining room.

When Mr. Wilkins went home on that same evening, and met his wife and children, it required his utmost effort at self-control, to conceal the deep depression of his feelings. From the pleasant place in which they had gathered for years, they must all soon go out. But, where would they go? They must sink lower; but, how much lower? Such thoughts were disturbing his mind to its very depths.

"Where is Grace?" asked Mr. Wilkins, not seeing his daughter in the parlor.

"She appeared unhappy about something when she came home

from school to-day, and has been in her room ever since," replied the mother.

"Did she say what had happened?" enquired the father, who instantly suspected that some thoughtless or ill natured school companion had said something to her about his failure in business.

"Not particularly: It is some little misunderstanding, I believe, with Clara Links."

"With Clara Links! What has she been saying to Grace?"

Mr. Wilkins manifested considerable feeling.

"Nothing, I believe. Grace, as I understand it, made some remark about Clara, which reached her ears and caused her to be offended."

"Oh! Is that all."

Mr. Wilkins was relieved, for he had naturally supposed that his daughter, whom he tenderly loved, had already been made to feel that her father's position was changed.

"Grace, dear," he said to her, when they met at the tea table. "What is the trouble between you and Clara Links?"

"There was an instant glow on the face of Grace, who, after pausing a moment or two to collect her thoughts, said—

"I offended her by a remark that she overheard."

"Ah? What was it?"

"Clara," replied Grace, "is one of the most inattentive girls in the class, and is reprimanded daily for her imperfect lessons. To-day she did worse than ever, and blundered so shockingly, that we all smiled. One of the girls made some remark to me about Clara, to which I replied that she was a dull scholar. Unfortunately she overheard me, and became very angry, and complained of me to Mr. _____."

"And what did he say?"

"Nothing at all to me. As soon as I could, I went to Clara, and tried to explain and apologize. But she would not listen, and said she wanted nothing more to do with me."

"And it has made you feel very uncomfortable?" said Mr. Wilkins.

"Indeed it has father."

"Well my daughter, let it be to you a lesson. If you cannot see merit in others, be as blind as possible to their defects. And above all, check yourself whenever inclined to speak of such defects."

"I shall make it a lesson of prudence father," replied Grace. "Clara is a pleasant girl and I like her. Up to this time, we have been warm friends; and it grieves me to think that I have wounded her feelings."

Finding that the unpleasant affair between Grace and the daughter of Mr. Links had not arisen in consequence of his misfortune, Mr. Wilkins took no further interest in the matter; other thoughts coming in to force that subject entirely from his mind. The evening was spent alone with his wife in earnest conference about the future.

CHAPTER V.

"I WANT to see you for a little while in my room, Clara," said Mrs. Links, as the family arose from the tea table on the evening referred to in the last chapter.

Clara went with her mother, who said to her, when they were alone.

"I'm sorry there is any difficulty between you and Grace Wilkins just at this time. You heard what your father said about Mr. Wilkins having failed in business?"

"Yes, mother," replied Clara, "and it has made me feel so bad. I could hardly eat any thing at tea time for thinking about it. Poor Grace! Will they have to take her from school?"

"I'm afraid so, dear."

"I shall be so sorry! She's one of the smartest girls there. Oh, I wish I could learn as fast as she does."

"Perhaps, Clara," said her mother, "she studies more closely than you do."

"I shouldn't wonder if she did. I know that I neglect my lessons."

"Don't you think you can forgive Clara for what she did to you yesterday?"

"Oh yes mother?" returned Clara, with much feeling, "I don't think of that at all now; I can only think about the dreadful change that you said was going to happen. Poor Grace! And they will have to take her from school."

"I'm afraid they will have to do so. Your father says that Mr. Wilkins has given up every thing. What his family will do, I cannot tell. Oh dear! It is dreadful to think about it."

"I'm so sorry I spoke unkindly to Grace yesterday," said Clara, the tears coming to her eyes. "I'm sure she had no thought of wounding my feelings. She tried to apologize, but I would not listen, and told her that I wished to have nothing more to do with her."

"That was neither kind nor forgiving Clara."

"I know it was not. And she looked all the afternoon so unhappy. I wonder if she has been told about her father's failure?"

"Perhaps so."

"Oh dear! And there are some girls in school who are bad enough to throw it up to her."

"Oh no! Surely not Clara!"

"Indeed there are, mother. The first that Aggy Lee knew of her father's failure she heard from one of the girls, who refused to sit by her because she said that Aggy's father was a broken merchant."

"How cruel!"

"Yes it was cruel. Poor Aggy burst into tears. She never came to school after that."

Mrs. Links sighed deeply. She was a woman of the finest sympathies; and her heart was ever going out towards others. In this she was the opposite of her husband. In all her intercourse with her children, she sought to inspire them with her own feelings. Whatever was selfish or cruel, she strove to subdue and eradicate; and whatever was kind and generous, she watered, trained and tended as carefully as if it were the choicest plant. Thus she modified what was hereditarily in them from her husband; and often saw good fruits, the reward of her anxious care.

"You will make it up with Grace," said the mother, "as soon as you see her to-morrow."

"Oh yes. But do you think she will be at school."

"I cannot tell my daughter. I hope so. If not you must see her at her mother's."

On the next morning, Grace, who had yet to be informed of her father's misfortunes, went to school as usual.

"And so *your* father has failed!" said a thoughtless, unfeeling girl to her, with a toss of the head and a curl of the lip, as she was taking her place at her desk.

"Who says so?" replied Grace quickly, a deep glow mantling her cheek.

"Why mother says so?" returned the girl. "And she says he's worse than nothing, and all gone to the dogs."

"It's not true," said Grace indignantly.

"It is true. And every girl in school knows it," was retorted. "I guess you won't be coming here long."

This happened a few minutes before the time for school to open. Startled and stung by a declaration so painful and so mortifying, Grace sat for a few moments utterly confounded. Her mind was beginning to revert to some things in the manner of both her father and mother that, strangely enough to her, corroborated the dreadful words just uttered, when an arm was drawn quickly about her neck and warm lips were pressed against her glowing cheek.

"Let us still be friends," said a low, but familiar voice. It was that of Clara Links.

Grace turned and looked at Clara for a moment or two, but did not speak. Her eyes were full of tears and her lips were quivering.

"I forgive you all; will you not forgive me?" whispered Clara.

"Yes—yes," half sobbed Grace.

"Do not feel hurt," continued Clara, glancing towards the scholars who sat beside Grace, "at what this unkind and thoughtless girl has said. She will be sorry for it when she is older."

Grace looked her gratitude and forgiveness; and then rising, retreated to the dressing room, whither Clara followed her.

"Where are you going?" asked the latter.

"Home," replied Grace in a low, choking voice.

"Do not feel so badly," urged Clara, trying to soothe her agitation.

"Clara," said Grace, pausing and looking steadily into the face

of her young companion. "Is it true that my father——" she could not finish the sentence.

"It is too true——"

Grace had heard enough. Clara paused without closing the sentence she had begun, for a low cry came from the lips of Grace, who hid her face upon her bosom and wept bitterly.

"Do not grieve so," whispered Clara, bending to her ear.

"It may not be as bad as you think. I will love you as before, yes, better than before."

"You are kind and good," sobbed Grace, as she strove to regain her self possession.

"Do not go home," said Clara.

"Oh yes," quickly answered Clara. "I must go home now. I cannot rest until I see my mother."

She then put on her things hurriedly and went away. Clara kissed her at parting.

When Grace arrived at home, she found her mother sitting alone in her chamber, with tears upon her cheeks.

"Dear mother!" said she eagerly. "Is it true about father?"

"What about him, Grace?"

"That he has failed."

"Who told you this?" enquired Mrs. Wilkins.

"Ada Bland threw it up to me, and said that every girl in the school knew it."

Mrs. Wilkins looked, for a few moments, into the tearful eyes and suffering face of her child, and then, without replying, drew her head down upon her bosom, and held her there for many minutes. After her own feelings, disturbed by the incident, were, in a measure, composed, she said to Grace.

"It is true, my dear child, that your father's business has failed; and that our circumstances are suddenly changed. But, the same Heavenly Father, who has watched over and guarded us from evil, thus far in life, still loves and cares for us."

Grace lifted her face, and looked earnestly at her mother. Her eyes were swimming in tears.

"And the same earthly Father, whom we all so love, and who is so worthy of our love," continued Mrs. Wilkins; her voice betraying more feeling than she wished to show, "is still our protector and provider. We will trust in him, and, at the same time, help to sustain him in the painful trials through which he is now passing. He is deeply troubled, and his spirits cast down because of his misfortune. Let us meet him with cheerful faces, and encourage him with hopeful words. In all the changes that come, let us not show him that we feel a single privation. When God filled his hands with plenty, he shared the bounty with us gladly; and now that he has but little, let us divide that little with him cheerfully and thankfully."

"I thought father looked troubled," said Grace, as her mother paused. "Last night at tea time, he did not eat any thing, though

he sipped his tea and made-believe-eat all the while we were at the table. Oh! how dreadfully he must feel."

"He feels badly enough, dear. But, he will feel a great deal worse if he sees us look sad. And now that we are talking about the trouble which has come upon us, Grace, let me say a good many things to you on the subject, You are our oldest child, and the only one who can comprehend the nature of the change that is about taking place. Your father, up to this time, has enjoyed a good income, from which he has provided us with every comfort in life that we could desire. No want has been unsupplied; no luxury withheld. But, now, his business is all broken up, and his income cut off. A great change will consequently soon pass upon us. We must leave our pleasant home, with all its comforts, and go into one that is smaller and humbler. This beautiful furniture must be sold. Our clothing will have to be plain and less costly; and, in all probability, we may have to send away our servants."

"Oh mother!" exclaimed the child, overwhelmed by her first glance at the extent of the calamity with which they were about being visited.

"To look at such great changes, as they approach us," continued Mrs. Wilkins, "makes the heart shrink. But, the nearer they come the less frightful do they appear; and when the changes actually take place we wonder at the ease with which we can accommodate ourselves to them. You are young yet, Grace; young to enter understandingly into the life-experiences you are about to encounter. But, you are not too young, I think, to comprehend this truth; that happiness comes from within and not from without. Do you know what I mean?"

Grace looked thoughtful, and slightly puzzled.

"A poor child may be happy and a rich one miserable," said Mrs. Wilkins. "Why is this, where one is surrounded by every external comfort and the other is not?"

"Some children are never happy, no matter what they have," said Grace.

"Why?" enquired her mother.

"Because they have discontented minds."

"Yes dear, that is it. It has been truthfully said, that a contented mind is a continual feast. Now, could you not be as happy, engaged in making a cup of tea or piece of toast for your father, if there were no one else to do it for him, as you could be while sitting at a richly furnished table with a servant standing by your chair to help you to whatever you might desire?"

"Oh yes, and a great deal happier," replied Grace quickly.

"Why happier, dear, in the former situation?"

"Because, I would be doing something for my father."

"And the thought of this would make your spirits light and cheerful?"

"I always like to be doing something for father. It seems to please him so much," replied Grace.

"Suppose he were to come home, tired and hungry, and there were no one else to get his supper for him. Would you feel unhappy because you had to do it?"

"Why mother!" exclaimed Grace. The question seemed so strange to her, that she could not comprehend its meaning.

"It would not make you unhappy?"

"Oh no! I would be so pleased to think that I could do it for him."

"And if he were so poor that he could not hire a chambermaid, would you think it a hardship to make up his bed for him every morning, and put the chamber in order so that he could sleep comfortably when he came home, weary with his day's labor, at night-fall? Would it make you feel unhappy?"

"Oh, no, no, mother! I should feel so glad that I was able to do this for him."

"You may have to do all this for your father, my dear girl," said Mrs. Wilkins, speaking more seriously, "and a great deal more.—Does the thought trouble your feelings?"

"No, mother," replied Grace, calmly.

"Now that your father has lost all his property, he will have to work very hard in order to earn a little money. The more expensively we live—that is, the larger the house we have, the more servants we keep, and the richer clothing we wear—the harder will he have to work."

Mrs. Wilkins paused, in order to be sure that Grace understood her as she went along. The young girl gazed with a look of enquiry and intelligence into her face, but did not reply.

"Could you not, for his sake, that is, in order to lighten his hard labor, give up, cheerfully, this elegant house, and our many servants, and move into a smaller and poorer house?"

"Oh yes, mother!" quickly answered Grace, with much eagerness of manner.

"You would not be unhappy about it?"

"Oh no, Mother! Why should I?"

"The change itself could not make you miserable. Great as it would be, you might still be happy. You see, then, my child, that it is from within that our unhappiness comes, and not from without. We may all, therefore, be as contented and cheerful in the state of poverty to which we are now descending, as when all the good things of this world were poured so freely upon us. The poorer we become, the more useful work will our hands find to do, and in doing this work, we will receive, in the cheerful spirit it brings, a recompense for what we have lost."

"I don't feel near so badly about it," said Grace, after thinking a little while, and striving to comprehend all her mother wished to convey. "It hurt me dreadfully at first. But, I understand it better now. Oh, I will do anything for father."

"Shall I tell you what it is best for you to begin to do, Grace?"

"Oh yes, Mother."

"To be cheerful when he comes home. Do not let him see the smallest cloud on your face ; for it will distress him."

"I'm glad you have told me this, Mother," replied Grace, with animation. "Oh no! He shall never see me look unhappy ; at least, not on my own account. For him I cannot help feeling troubled ; and this may show itself sometimes. But, I will try and not let him see it."

"Thank you, my dear child!" said Mrs. Wilkins, with a good deal of feeling—"Thank you for the brave and womanly spirit with which you meet this trouble. We will talk more about it at another time. By shrinking closer together, we shall not feel so severely the storm that beats upon us ; and by mutually seeking to sustain each other, we shall scarcely be conscious of weakness. And now, had you not better return to school again?"

"Father will not be able to send me to that school," replied Grace. "I shall have to leave it ; and I might as well do so at once."

"It is one of the best schools in the city," said Mrs. Wilkins, "and we think you had better continue to go there, at least for a while longer. Your father and I have already talked about this."

"But, mother, if father is poor now, he cannot afford to send me there."

"For the present, Grace, we think it best not to change," replied Mrs. Wilkins. "In every thing else, we will reduce our expenses ; but, until forced to take you from this school, through absolute inability to pay the bills, your father will not have you removed."

Grace did not appear satisfied with this.

"Perhaps my child," said her mother, "you do not fully appreciate the value of a good education. It is something of which no change of fortune can deprive you ; something by which you may not only secure a larger share of earthly blessings for yourself, but, for those also whom you love. It is education that gives us the ability to serve others ; and the more perfect the education, the higher will be this ability."

Still Grace did not seem to acquiesce in the views of her Mother.

"Do you not know, Grace," continued Mrs. Wilkins, "that the more perfect the education of any one, the higher reward he will receive when he comes to use the knowledge he has acquired for useful purposes in society? Let me make this plain to you. Our cook has a very poor education. She can read and write a little ; but, she cannot teach either of these useful acquirements. Nor can she teach music, nor the languages, for she has never been herself instructed therein. All she can do is to cook and work about the house. For this service she is paid only a dollar and a half a week. Now, Miss Williams, who has sewed for us occasionally, is better instructed and more skilful in a rather higher branch of domestic economy.—She can sew with neatness, and make and fit dresses. In consequence, she receives three dollars a week, just twice as much as Nancy earns, and yet she does not work as many hours as the latter.—But Miss Williams has not received so good an education as Miss

Barker, who gives music lessons to your cousin Jane. Her ability commands a still higher price. She can earn more than five times as much in the year as Miss Williams. Then there is Mrs. Carlton, who, by teaching French and Spanish, and also giving lessons on the Guitar, is able to earn enough to support herself, three children, and a sick husband. In these cases, you see the difference between a low and a high ability; and all ability comes as the result of education."

"Oh Mother!" exclaimed Grace. "I understand it all now. If I were only a young lady, with my education completed, how much help I could be to you and father! I would teach music, or French and Spanish, and give you all I earned."

"Thank you, my dear child! for your good intention," said the mother. "I trust, now, that you comprehend the value of a good education,—at least in part, for its value is beyond computation—and that you will wisely improve every opportunity in our power to give you."

"I will, mother! I will," returned the young girl, earnestly. "I see it all very differently now; and, while I do go to school, not an hour shall pass idly. But, if you please, I will not go back to-day. I feel as if I would rather have a little while to myself; to-morrow I can return and go on as before."

"Just as you feel about that, Grace. But, don't mention to your father what you heard there to-day. It will make him feel bad."

"Oh, no, no! I won't mention that mother. But, wasn't it unkind in Ada Bland?"

"It was, Grace, very unkind. But Ada is a young and thoughtless girl; and you must try to forgive her."

"I do forgive her mother," answered Grace. "And I hope she may never know the pain I felt when she said what she did about father."

"That is the right spirit my child. Let us ever learn to forgive those who trespass against us. *For if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*"

CHAPTER VI.

"I presume you were not again troubled with that girl," said Mr. Links to his daughter Clara, on the day Grace Wilkins had been so hurt by what was said to her at school.

"What girl, father?" asked Clara.

"Why, that daughter of Wilkins'," replied Mr. Links in a voice of contempt.

There was that in the tone and manner of her father that pained and shocked the mind of Clara more than his words. She felt a

choking sensation; and did not even trust herself to make any reply.

"Was she at school to-day?" asked Mr. Links.

"No sir," answered Clara in a low voice, while her eyes were cast upon the floor.

"She'll not insult you again; I'll warrant."

"I don't think she meant to insult me, father," Clara ventured to say.

"Don't you indeed! And isn't it an insult to be laughed at and exposed to ridicule before a whole school? If not, what is it?"

Clara returned no answer. Mr. Links made several other remarks on the subject, but there was no response.

A few evenings afterwards, Clara happened to mention the name of Grace, in some conversation with her mother.

"What Grace?" asked Mr. Links.

"Grace Wilkins," replied Clara.

"She is not going to your school yet?"

"Yes sir, she comes regularly."

"Regularly!"

"Yes sir. She told me that she wanted her father to take her away, but that he said it was the best school in the city, and he wished her to remain there."

"The best, ha! And so nothing but the best will suit him and her! That'll do excellently well for a broken merchant whose estate will not pay his debts."

Mr. Links was fretted. He said no more, however, for he felt that the spirit he manifested was re-acted against rather than approved, both by his wife and daughter. He was fretted, because he was angry with his debtor, by whom he would probably lose three or four thousand dollars; angry with his debtor's child because she had dared, inferior as she was in his eyes, to insult his daughter. When evil impulses in the heart of a man like Mr. Links are once aroused, they rarely go to rest again. The fact that Mr. Wilkins continued to send Grace to the best school in the city—and that was the most he could do for Clara, worried him beyond measure. Instead of feeling gratified to know that Grace was not deprived of the advantages of so good a seminary, and pleased to see her parents making sacrifices for the sake of securing good educations for their children, he was angry because she was not cut off from such a privilege and thrust down to a lower level.

"Does Grace Wilkins still go to your school?" he asked of Clara, a few weeks afterwards.

"Yes sir," replied Clara.

Some half audible impatient ejaculations fell from his lips. But, he said no more.

After having relinquished every thing to his creditors, and moved his family into a smaller house, Mr. Wilkins set earnestly about obtaining some employment by which to support those who were dependant upon him. All his late effects were in the hands of a person who had been chosen by the creditors as assignee, and from what

little Mr. Wilkins knew of his mode of settling the concern, he felt very sure that little over sixty per cent of the creditor's claims would be realized. Had he been permitted to make the collections and close up the business, he was sanguine that he could have paid off every thing, and it might be, have saved a few thousand dollars from the wreck. Now, the prospect was, that he would be left some thirty or forty thousand dollars in debt—thus hopelessly embarrassed.

"What are you to do?" enquired an old business friend of Mr. Wilkins, a few weeks after he had sunk down from the level he had occupied for years.

"Heaven knows!" replied Mr. Wilkins, despondingly. "I must get something, to do however, and that right speedily, for I hav'nt twenty dollars left in the world."

"How do you stand in regard to your late business?"

"Responsible for all deficiencies."

"Ah? That's bad. I thought you obtained a release."

"No. Something was said about it; but Mr. Links opposed the suggestion so strongly, that it fell to the ground."

The man shook his head, and remarked, half aside.

"Bad—bad. I'm sorry for that."

"Don't you think it possible to get a release?" he added, with some interest in his voice.

"I'm afraid not. Mr. Links won't come into the arrangement; that is certain—and he influences a good many of the creditors."

"You should, by all means, endeavor to effect this Mr. Wilkins."

"They did not grant the boon, and I cannot go and beg for it."

"Is there not something of weakness in that feeling?" suggested the friend.

"Perhaps so. But, it is the weakness of virtue. I cannot go to a man whom I owe, and say to him, 'forgive me the debt.' My tongue would cleave to the roof of my mouth."

"But, the interest of your family requires you to make this sacrifice of feeling."

"I am ready to devote even my life for their good," replied Mr. Wilkins, with more feeling than he had meant to exhibit. "But this humiliation——"

He checked himself, and became silent.

"Mr. Links is the leading objector to the measure of release?" said the friend in a calm voice.

"He is."

"Links is a hard-hearted man."

"You would have thought so, had you been present at the meeting of my creditors."

"Was he insulting?"

"Cruelly insulting."

"How base! The man who can trample on and insult a brother in misfortune, must be devoid of all that is noble and generous."

"I think so. But, Mr. Lincoln, it is useless to sigh over what is past. I have gone through the ordeal, and am yet alive. All I ask,

now, is some employment by which I can earn bread for my family."

The friend was touched by the subdued and broken spirit with which this was said.

"You must be released from your present obligations," he replied with firmness. "After that few difficulties will be in your way. You know Everhart?"

"Yes."

"He is about going into business."

"Ah?"

"He has means enough, but lacks experience and a thorough knowledge of mercantile affairs."

"So I am aware."

"He was asking me about you this very day."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. If you were only released, unconditionally, from the liabilities of your old business, I think a connection might be formed with Everhart."

"Do you really think so!" said Mr. Wilkins, his face brightening.

"I do, seriously. And if you will take my advice, you will set about getting a release forthwith."

Mr. Wilkins cast his eyes to the ground and stood silent. Every thing in him shrunk from the proposed application.

"I'm afraid it will be useless," he said, at length, with much apparent despondency.

"It must be done. It shall be done!" exclaimed Mr. Lincoln, in whose mind the purpose to effect himself the desired object, was instantly formed. "It shall be done!" he added—"And I will do it."

The look of gratitude that instantly beamed from the eyes of Mr. Wilkins gave a more vigorous life to the generous impulse.

"Give me a list of your principal creditors, and I will see them, personally, forthwith," said Mr. Lincoln. "In the mean time I will call upon this Links, and secure his consent. I guess I can manage him."

"You shall have the list in an hour. I will leave it at your store."

The two men then separated, a lively hope filling the breast of one, and the delight of a good purpose that of the other.

"Mr. Lincoln. How are you to-day? Is there any thing that I can do for you?" said Mr. Links, smiling blandly, as the gentleman he addressed entered his store.

"Yes; I think there is," replied Mr. Lincoln, "and I'm glad to find you in the right mood."

"Say on." The smile on the face of Mr. Links slightly faded. There was something in the manner of his visitor that he did not exactly comprehend.

"I want you," said Lincoln, "to set an example of humanity to-day, which others, I know, will be ready to follow."

The smile was gone.

"Humanity? Hum-m-m! What about humanity?"

"I want you to sign a release for Mr. Wilkins."

The brow of Mr. Links fell, his lips drew together, and his head gave a decided negative.

"He's given up every thing."

"I'm not so sure of that."

"What has put this thought into your mind?"

"He still sends his children to the most expensive schools in the city. How can he do so without money?"

"Are you certain?"

"I send my daughter to Mr.——'s school—the best I can find: and his daughter goes there also."

"Ah? But, perhaps he'd paid in advance, and the term has not yet expired. I'm sure he's retained nothing. I've known Mr. Wilkins for a good many years, and I don't believe there is a more honest man in the community."

Links shrugged his shoulders and looked incredulous, saying as he did so—

"We don't know every body."

"It is better to err on the side of humanity," replied the visitor. "Mr. Wilkins is now entirely prostrate, with a family, raised tenderly and amid luxuries, dependant upon him. He has ability and energy, and these, if untrammelled, will enable him to rise above his depressed condition. To remove these trammels is not only the dictate of humanity, but of interest. Situated as Mr. Wilkins now is, with an unsettled business likely to leave a large balance against him, he cannot again venture into the walks of trade, even if friends were to supply him with capital; neither can he form a connection with any one who has means at command, and who would gladly unite money with his ability."

"I presume no one would care about forming a connection with Wilkins," said Links in a tone of contempt.

"There is a gentleman with ample means, who is already looking towards him and thinking about making him a proposal."

"Who?"

"I don't feel at liberty to mention the name."

"Yourself?"

"No."

"Wilkins's estate will not pay over sixty or seventy cents in the dollar. That is pretty clear. And he owes me some ten thousand dollars. Do you think I am going to sign away three or four thousand dollars? No!"

"By doing so, you would put it in his power to pay this sum?"

"Power!" There was contempt in the merchant's tone of voice. "Power! What good would his ability do me?"

"It would pay the debt he owes you."

"Not unless I had the law on my side. No sir; I will not sign this release."

Mr. Links, who loved money, and who never lost a dollar without suffering pain, saw, in the alleged offer of a business connection with Mr. Wilkins, the means of securing whatever deficit remained after

his proportion of the insolvent's estate was received. If every one else signed off, his refusal to do so would hardly prevent the connection in view. Rather than let so good an opportunity go unimproved, Mr. Wilkins would undoubtedly secure his claim.

"Do not say that," urged Mr. Lincoln. "It can do no good to hold a man down to the earth. Rather help him up, after he has fallen."

"I have quite as much as I can do to take care of myself," replied Links, coldly. "If I stopped by the way to pick up every one who tripped and fell, I would soon be on my own back. No; I have said from the first that I would not release this man, and I will not. I'm opposed, in principle, to the system of release. It's nothing more nor less than a premium on insolvency."

All efforts to change this resolution were unavailing.—Links meant just what he said. And Mr. Lincoln went away disappointed.

In an hour after his separation with Mr. Wilkins, that gentleman called at his store with the list of creditors he had been desired to make out.

"He would not sign off," said Wilkins, who saw, in a moment, by the countenance of Mr. Lincoln, that his application had been unfavorably received.

"No. He positively refuses."

"I expected nothing more," yet the deep sigh which accompanied these words, plainly enough showed that his hopes had been much excited.

"If all but Mr. Links could be induced to give a release, you might be able to pay off any balance that may be due him after your old business is finally settled."

"The holding back of one will influence others. No—if Mr. Links will not let me go free, the case is hopeless. It is useless to take another step."

While they were yet conversing, a gentleman known by Mr. Wilkins came in.

"Old Mr. Archer is gone at last,"

"Ah? When did he die?" enquired Mr. Lincoln.

"An hour ago."

"There's an opening for you Mr. Wilkins," said Lincoln. "How would you like the place he has left vacant?"

"He was President of the——Marine Insurance company."

"Yes."

"What did he receive!"

"Two thousand dollars a year."

"I would be very grateful to the friend who would place me there."

"You shall have the appointment!" said Lincoln, speaking with enthusiasm, "as long as we can do no better for you. I own considerable stock in the company and can influence a good deal more."

"Don't be too sanguine." The face of Mr. Wilkins was bright with hope as he said this.

"I'm not over sanguine. I believe you can get the place without feeling a breath of opposition."

And the result was as Mr. Lincoln had supposed. The annual election of President and Directors was held a few days after the death of the former president, and Mr. Wilkins received the appointment. The only vote thrown in opposition was by Mr. Links, he being a stockholder in the Company. Whether his vote were dictated by self interest or ill-nature, is difficult to say. Most probably both united in causing him to act as he did. Already he had pretty well settled it in his mind, that the other creditors would sign off, and that a co-partnership would then be formed between Mr. Wilkins and the capitalist to whom Lincoln had referred. In this event, he would be safe for all that might in the end still be due from the debtor's estate. The election of said debtor to the office of President of an Insurance Company, with only a salary, cut off that prospect; and he felt exceedingly ill-natured about it. This ill-nature was increased by the conviction that, in so positively refusing to yield any thing to a humane dictate, he had, in all probability, overreached himself.

CHAPTER VII.

WHEN a final settlement of Mr. Wilkins's estate was made, the result was not far from what had been anticipated. The one hundred and seventy thousand dollars of assets had shrunk, under the hand of the Assignee, to eighty thousand, net; thus giving the creditors about sixty-five per cent. of their claims.

"Well sir," said Links to Mr. Wilkins, meeting him one day after the last dividend had been made, "that business of yours has wound up beautifully!"

"In what respect?" asked Mr. Wilkins.

"We're all in for it handsomely."

"It has divided as much as I expected under the mode of settlement that was adopted. Had you given me the winding up of the business, I could have obtained a far better result."

"I don't believe it."

"You are at liberty to believe as you think best," said Mr. Wilkins, who was a good deal annoyed, not only at the fact of being addressed on the subject of his late business by one who had marred every thing by his ill-natured, narrow minded policy, but with the manner of the address in particular. "You had your own way in the settlement of my affairs, and the least you can do is to be satisfied with the result."

"Indeed! No doubt you find it very pleasant sport to snap your

fingers in the face of a man who has lost by you to the tune of three or four thousand dollars."

"Mr. Links!" exclaimed Mr. Wilkins. "This is an outrage!"

"Not half so great as to withhold from me what is my due," said the creditor, meaningly.

"What am I to understand by your use of the word *withhold*?" asked the debtor, a good deal excited.

"Just what the word expresses."

"Do you mean, sir, that I did not relinquish all my property at the time I made an assignment?"

"I don't know, I am sure. I hope, for your own conscience sake, that you did."

"Then to what do you allude?"

"You are in the receipt of a handsome salary."

"Well?"

"And, instead of living on one half of it, and letting the other half go towards the payment of your debts, you live extravagantly for a man situated as you are, and thus consumes the whole of your income."

It was some time before Mr. Wilkins, thus accused, could reply. He then said, in a subdued voice, for he was deeply hurt.

"I have a family to provide for and to educate."

"But, you have no right to provide for them luxuriously, and educate them expensively at *my* charge. When I see your daughter going to the same high-priced school where mine goes, I say to myself—'All that is very well; but I pay the bills.' And so I do."

"No sir, you do not!" replied Mr. Wilkins, with some warmth, for the words of his overbearing creditor stung him. "I pay the bills."

"But the money is mine," retorted Links.

"It is not true! With my own labor I provide for my family. You took every thing; and not content with that; you still hold me down with your foot upon my neck. Had you permitted me to rise from my prostrate condition; to stand firmly on my feet again, I might have recovered myself. I have ability, but you would not permit me to exercise that ability. You have tied me hand and foot, and yet call upon me to run. But, sir, you call upon me in vain! Had you released me when I gave up every thing, others would have done the same; and now, instead of being simply in the receipt of two thousand dollars a year, I would have been in active business, with a capital at my command, and, in a fair way of recovering all I had lost. And He who knows my heart, knows that I would, if prosperous, have paid off my debts to the uttermost farthing. That hope is gone now! Gone through your agency, and yet you stoop to assail and censure me! Suppose I were to deprive my family of comforts and my children of a liberal education, in order to pay the debt your mismanagement of my effects has left hanging over me? How much could I pay? Say eight hundred dollars a year. Why, the interest on the balance of forty-five thousand dollars that remains

is some twenty-seven hundred dollars per annum! The case is hopeless under the present state of affairs! And what would be your annual dividend under this system of disbursement? About sixty dollars! And for this paltry sum, sir, would you, who count your tens and tens of thousands, rob my children of a good education?"

"All very good talk," said Links, who felt himself shrinking before his aroused debtor. "But it doesn't alter the case at all. You are spending more money than a man situated as you are is authorized to spend. Your children are no better than the children of a man whose income is but a thousand dollars, and have no more abstract right to receive a better education. If you wish to act justly, live on half your income and pay the rest away."

"After the children God has given are educated and provided for, I may do as you suggest; not before. As for the difference between myself and the man who earns but a thousand dollars, it is this. My ability to serve society is greater than his, and my family are entitled to natural blessings in a different and higher ratio. Here, as the President of an Insurance Company, I am like a man moving along the highway with fetters upon his limbs; and you, sir, have thus fettered me. Yours, then, be a portion of the detriment! To all I can earn, with these manacles on my limbs, my family has a just claim, and you may be sure, Mr. Links, that I will pay their claim before you receive a dollar. This I wish you to understand clearly, and also, the principle from which I act."

"Pardon me for saying Mr. Wilkins, that I think your principle a dishonest one. What you owe is not your own, and in using the money that comes into your hands above the common necessities of life, you use what belongs to others. I speak plainly."

"What do you call the common necessities of life?" asked the debtor.

"Food and clothing sufficient for health, comfort, and a decent appearance in society. Beyond that, a man in your circumstances has no right to abstract any thing."

"Will you allow nothing for education?"

"That is provided for at the public expense. Send your children to the common schools, and it will cost you nothing."

"I might send my boy there. But not my girls."

"Are your girls better than the daughters of thousands who are no more able than you are to give their children expensive educations?"

"I am able to give them good educations," replied Mr. Wilkins with much feeling, "and I thank God for it! If I were not able, I would seek the best education I could get for them in the common schools. But, as, in the permission of Providence, means sufficient for the attainment of this great good are placed in my hands, I will use them in thankfulness, believing, that, in so doing, I will best discharge my duty to my offspring, to society and to my God. Estimating as highly as I do the importance of educating the forming and maturing minds of the young, you may be sure that, while my daily

labor procures me the means of doing a work of so much importance for the souls committed to my care, I shall let no considerations, such as you urge, induce me to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs."

"Children's bread to dogs! What do you mean?"

"I see little in the spirit you manifest, Mr. Links, above that shown by a greedy dog. To give you sixty dollars a year of my earnings, and distribute in like ratio to my other creditors, not one of whom would receive a particle of real benefit from the distribution, and thus rob my children of the education they are capable of receiving and using, would be to elevate a false idea of honesty above a real good. And let me tell you sir, that in desiring such a sacrifice, you show a far more dishonest spirit than you would attribute to me."

"Dishonest, sir! Dishonest! What do you mean? I will not bear your insults."

"I speak to you as I think," replied Mr. Wilkins. "It is not honest in you to seek to rob my children of the only thing left in my power to give them—an education. And not only is it dishonest towards them; it is dishonest towards the community in which you reside. They have active minds, and if well educated, will make useful members of society. The higher the education which any one receives, the higher becomes his ability to serve the common good. Knowing this, it is my duty to society to give my children the highest attainable degree of education."

"If you steal the money to pay the quarter bills," said Links, with sarcastic bitterness.

"No sir;—If I can get the money by honest industry," replied Mr. Wilkins, with firmness and dignity.

"Though honorable debts may never be paid."

"I have already explained my views on that subject," replied Mr. Wilkins. "But as you do not seem to comprehend me, let me express them a little more broadly. In equity I do not owe a single dollar."

"What!"

"I repeat. In equity I do not owe a single dollar."

"What will you do with the forty-five thousand dollars standing on your own books against you?"

"That deficit, you and your fellow creditors made, through mismanagement and a reckless mode of settling my estate. You set me aside as having no interest whatever in the property assigned; and gave me no agency in the settlement. What right, then, have you to come and demand of me to restore what you have lost?"

"Subterfuge!"

"No sir! It is very far from it. You seem to forget that a debtor has rights. In this whole matter, I am the wronged one, and you are one of my oppressors. And now, in the sight of Heaven, I charge you with wrong and oppression! Shame, sir! that you have so little humanity in your breast as to seek, still further, to trample

on and oppress me ; and not me only, but my helpless children. Sir ! There is no action without re-action ; and this you will feel either in this world or the next. I pray that you may feel it in this, and that it may bring you into a better state of mind."

There was an energy and dignity about Mr. Wilkins against which Links had been striving in this whole interview. Unable to withstand it any longer, he turned suddenly away and left the man he had wronged and insulted. He never met him again, except as a stranger.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE change in the external condition of Mr. Wilkins' family was not so great as it promised at first to be. They had been living at a cost of about four thousand dollars a year ; and of course had to reduce materially their rate of expenses. But, as the minds of all were prepared for a much lower decent than the one taken, the change did not prove so very distressing.

With the exception of Mr. Wilkins, Grace probably suffered more than any other member of the family. The shock given to her feelings by Ada Bland, to a certain extent unnerved her, and made her over-sensitive. The light in which her mother had presented to her the misfortunes of her father, awoke for him the tenderest sympathies ; and she felt willing to do and suffer any thing for his sake. Strongly did she urge her mother at first, to take her away from the expensive school of Mr. ———, lest the cost to her father should be more than he could easily meet. But, when the great importance of a good education was explained to her, and how it would enable her not only to move in a higher and more useful place in society when she became a woman, but even to aid her father in supporting and educating her brother and sister should he not be fully able to do so, she acquiesced in the views of her parents, and returned to her school, fully resolved to devote to her studies every power with which she was endowed.

From this time, Grace was changed. Her mind suddenly attained a state of maturity beyond her age ; while her feelings acquired a morbid acuteness that made them painfully susceptible. To return to school, with the cruel words of Ada Bland ringing in her ears, was a trial most painful to endure. "Mother says your father is worse than nothing and all gone to the dogs !" "All the girls in the school know it !" Could she forget these words ? No ! Severe was the trial through which she passed on going back. With all the strength of her young mind, she reasoned on the subject ; but it availed little to remove the deep sense of humiliation that she suffered.

"Kiss me, dear mother," said she, when about leaving for school. She felt that in her mother's kiss, there would be a sustaining power.

Mrs. Wilkins understood her. Tears were in the eyes of the struggling child as she lifted them to the loving face of her parent.

"Heaven bless you, my child!" said the mother, in a voice touched with emotion, as she bent down and kissed her fervently.

"It is wrong to feel so about it," said Grace, speaking to herself as she walked slowly on her way to school. "It was unkind and unfeeling in Ada to say what she did; and she has a great deal more cause to feel bad than I have; for mother has often said, the wronger is always more hurt than the wronged. Her words need not injure me; but, coming as they did from bad feelings in her, they must have done her harm. Oh dear! I wish I could forget what she said. Or, rather, I wish she had never said it. All the girls in school know that my father has failed; and they think badly of him. If they only knew how good a father he is!"

Then Grace tried to push these thoughts from her mind, and walked on more rapidly. As she drew nearer and nearer the school, her heart sunk lower and lower in her bosom, and throbbed with a more troubled motion. When she set her foot upon the threshold, it ceased to beat for a moment or two altogether. As she entered her class room, it seemed to her as if every eye were upon her. Her own were cast to the floor. She hurried to her desk and sat down, trembling, without glancing either to the right or to the left.

"I thought you was't coming any more," said Ada Bland, whose seat was by her side. The girl spoke in a cold, unfeeling voice.

The weakest and most sensitive can repel an indignity when it goes beyond a certain limit. A finger touch upon a harp string, be it given ever so lightly, awakens a vibration. But a heavy hand laid thereon instantly checks the thrill and the quivering wire becomes pulseless. The words of Ada were like this hand upon the harp-string. They instantly stilled the trembling heart of Grace, who lifted her eyes to Ada's countenance, and with a steady look that made the girls' lashes droop to her cheeks, said—

"What reason had you for thinking this?"

"Oh, because your fa——"

But, Ada felt a strong re-action from the mind of Grace, whose eyes, to which she had again raised her own, seemed to go through her.

For a few moments the two girls looked at each other, and then their eyes were withdrawn, and each turned to her own desk, and bent over the books resting thereon.

"Were you not well yesterday, Grace?" said Mr. ———, who had approached the part of the room where Grace was sitting, and now stood beside her. His voice was kind beyond its usual tone.

Grace turned partly around, and as she looked up to him, replied—
"Not very well."

"Are your father and mother well?" asked Mr. ———.

"Yes sir. I thank you."

"Ada," said Mr. ———, now speaking to the girl who sat beside Grace. There was a perceptible change in his tone of voice. "I

believe I must give you another seat. Please to take the vacant desk beside Agnes Williams."

Grace understood the meaning of this and cast, almost involuntarily, a grateful look towards Mr. ———.

Ada, with a reluctance that she could not conceal slowly proceeded to obey the direction of her teacher. She had been only a few moments gone from her old place, when Clara Links took the seat she had left vacant beside Grace, and looking affectionately into the face of the latter, said—

"Mr.—— says I may sit by you. I'm glad you have come back again. I was so afraid you were going to leave the school."

"No; father wishes me to continue with Mr.——," returned Grace, looking at Clara with an expression of gratitude for the kindness she manifested. "He says it is the best school in the city, and that I must have every advantage it is possible for him to give me."

"I'm glad he thinks so. I told Mr.—— of Ada's rudeness to you yesterday. He was hurt about it; and said that he would not permit Ada to sit beside you any longer."

Grace made no answer to this. Gently and kindly as Clara referred to the subject of the change in her father's circumstances, she felt pained by the allusion. Clara had a perception of this, and did not touch that theme, even remotely, again.

Every one in the school observed a change in Grace; and all knew the cause of it, for the fact of her father's failure in business had passed from lip to lip. Some pitied her; while, in the minds of others, a coldness and estrangement were instantly felt. The exact moral defect of a failure in business, the latter did not clearly understand; but, that it involved something disgraceful, they inferred from the tone, words, and manner of those older and supposed to be wiser than themselves.

What Grace suffered during that day was never forgotten. In every one who spoke to her or looked at her, she saw a change that reminded her of her father's misfortune. The teacher's kinder tone; the gentle attentions of Clara Links; the stealthy glance towards her, or bold stare, which she now and then perceived from one and another; and especially the cold and shrinking manner of certain girls, in contact with whom she was thrown, all spoke to her of the sudden fall from wealth which her family had sustained, and of the different feelings with which she was regarded on that account.

When the school hours at length closed, and the merry-hearted girls gave vent to their long restrained feeling, Grace moved quietly and silently from her desk to the dressing room. As she was tying on her bonnet, she heard some one say—

"Where's Grace Wilkins?"

"I don't know," was replied.

"Doesn't she look cut down?" added the first speaker. "You wouldn't catch me pushing myself here if my father had failed. I suppose Mr.—— out of pity, is going to educate her for nothing. But I'd be too independent, for that."

"Hush-h-h." said another, in a voice of warning, "Grace is in the room."

"Indeed! I didn't know that," was replied in a lower tone. "I hope she didn't hear me. I don't want to hurt her feelings."

Grace glided from the room and heard no more.

Oh, how bitter were these first experiences of the debtor's child! Alas, for corrupt human nature! How quickly does its inherent self-love show itself in the persecution of others! How early do the strong begin to oppress the weak!—Those who stand high to look down with contempt on those below them. How soon is the external and extrinsic elevated above what is internal and intrinsic!

Grace walked away alone, and with the tears ready to gush from her eyes at every step. As she drew near home, a womanly feeling prompted an effort at self-control.

"I must not let mother see my weakness," said she to herself. "She has troubles enough to bear; and they are a great deal worse than mine. Let the girls think and say what they please; it cannot really hurt me. If my father have failed, he is an honest man, and kind and good to all."

Thus Grace sought to strengthen herself in her trials; and the effort was, to some extent, successful, as all such efforts are. When she arrived at home she was able to assume a tolerably cheerful air, and to conceal from her mother the suffering through which she had passed.

"My share of this trouble is but small," was the thought of Grace, as she looked upon the serious countenance of her father as they gathered around the dinner table, and noticed that he scarcely tasted the food set before him.

In the afternoon she started again for school, and in a calmer frame of mind. But this calmness was soon disturbed. As she was walking along, she saw one of her school-mates, a girl with whom she had been on very pleasant terms, crossing the street just in advance. She stepped forward more briskly, to meet her as she reached the pavement, but the girl, perceiving this, moved on quickly and thus succeeded in avoiding her.

Grace was deeply hurt at this evident purpose to shun her. The act completely destroyed the equable frame of mind with which she was returning to school, and left her heart almost as much depressed as it was in the morning. On gaining her class room, she glided with noiseless steps to her desk, in order to avoid observation, where she took her place, and bent down to resume her studies, not glancing to the right nor to the left. Clara, who was sitting at the desk beside her, seeing that Grace was disturbed in mind about something, thought it best to say nothing. But, in a little while she asked her for the correct pronunciation of a French word in the lesson she was studying.

This was immediately given by Grace in a cheerful tone of voice. The very act of obliging her friend had caused an instant re-action in her depressed feelings.

"Oh, I wish I could acquire the right accent and pronunciation as easily as you can, Grace!" said Clara. "I am a very dull scholar."

"It only requires a little attention and practice," replied Grace.

"It may only require that for you; but I learn nothing easily."

"There are some things I find hard," said Grace. "But, when a lesson is hard, I give it more of my thoughts; and I always master it in the end. If we keep on trying, the most difficult task can at length be learned."

"I believe there is truth in that," remarked Clara.

"I have proved it a good many times," said the other.

"And I a few times. But I must prove it oftener in the future," returned Clara. "Thank you for the hint, Grace? I will try to profit by it."

This was not a mere vanishing good effort. The purpose in the mind of Clara, stimulated by contact with Grace, was a living purpose.

When the class was called, an hour afterwards, to recite their lessons, Clara acquitted herself better than she had ever done before.

"So much for trying," she whispered to Grace, as she resumed her place by her side.

"There is nothing like trying," returned Grace with a smile of encouragement. "I have proved it hundreds of times."

"But you never have to try very hard. I wish every thing were as easy to me as it is to you."

"Oh yes, I do have to try hard," replied Grace. "And often very hard. Nothing is done without an effort."

"But how hard it is to make the effort!" said Clara.

"It is often harder to make the effort, I have heard mother sometimes say, than to do the work after it is once begun."

"That's very true," responded Clara with animation, as if a new light had broken upon her. "The hardest thing I have to do is to put my mind down to study. If I try, I can learn well enough."

"Yes, there is every thing in trying," said Grace, as she turned from her companion to her books; and both resumed their studies.

"I am so hurt at the way some of the girls in school act towards Grace Wilkins," said Clara to her mother, a few days after her reconciliation with Grace; "and yet, few of them can compare with her in any thing. She is smarter and better than the best of those who treat her so badly. I'm sure I like her better than any girl in school."

"In what are they unkind to Grace?" asked Mrs. Links.

"Some of the girls haven't spoken to her since her father's failure."

"Not on that account?"

"Oh yes."

"She sustains no loss in giving up their friendship," said the mother.

"I know. But, still, she cannot help feeling hurt at such conduct. I've seen the tears in her eyes a good many times."

"Poor child!"

"Yesterday, Flora Edwards said so loud that Grace heard her. 'I

wonder why she keeps coming here? Mother says her father is no longer able to pay the school bills."

"How cruel! Clara, dear; above all things never wound, by a look or word, those who are in misfortune."

"Can't I ask her to come home with me some day after school?"

"Certainly. Tell her that I will be very glad to see her."

"I'll say it before some of the very girls who have treated her so shamefully!" said Clara.

To this Mrs. Links did not reply.

On the next day, Clara invited Grace to go home with her after school. Grace said that she could not do so then, but that, if her mother did not object, she would be happy to accept her invitation for some other occasion.

Mrs. Wilkins saw no reason for withholding her consent to her daughter's request, when made. So, a few days afterwards, Grace accompanied Clara home, where she was very kindly received by Mrs. Links and all the children. Henry with whom Grace had always been a favorite, was delighted to see her. He insisted on her playing for him, and kept her at the piano half the time she was in the house.

A little before night-fall, and just as Grace was beginning to think of returning home, Mr. Links came in. The children now recollected how unkindly he had spoken of Grace only a little while before; and they did not present her to him. But he, noticing her, said, smiling,

"What young lady is this?"

"It is Grace Wilkins," replied Clara.

Instantly there was a change in Mr. Links. He dropped the hand he had taken—the smile left his face—and he turned himself away from the group of children. Every one felt chilled. Mr. Links walked to the window, and stood looking out for some moments.—Then he went from the room. In doing so, he said—

"Clara, I wish to see you for a moment."

Clara followed him out.

Distinctly did Grace hear Mr. Links say, as he stood in the hall with Clara.

"Did you invite that girl home?"

"Yes, father," Clara replied.

"Well, don't do it again."

"Father," said Clara, "Grace is a very good girl. Mother says —,"

"Clara!" Mr. Links spoke with ill-disguised anger. "It is my wish that you no longer keep her company. I do not like her family, and I wish no association with them whatever. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, father," replied Clara, in a choking voice.

"Very well. I speak now on this subject, once for all. Her father is a man whom I have reason to dislike, and I believe his daughter to be a vulgar minded girl."

"Oh no, no, father! She is —."

"I wish no apologies for her, Clara," said Mr. Links, peremptorily. "There is to be no association between my family and that of Mr. Wilkins. This is something that I desire you to understand clearly."

Saying this, Mr. Links turned away from his daughter and went up stairs.

Clara did not return to the parlor immediately, but remained for two or three minutes standing in the hall, striving to regain her calmness of feeling so as to go in and meet Grace without betraying in her face or tone of voice any thing of what had passed between her and her father. While thus standing, one of the parlor doors opened, and Grace, with her shawl and bonnet on, came hurriedly out.

"Good bye Clara," said she, in a voice that betrayed the fact of her having heard the cruel words of Mr. Links. And, passing on, she went from the house. Quick as thought Clara sprung into the parlor.

"Did Grace hear what father said?" She enquired, eagerly, of her brother.

"Every word," returned the lad, with ill-concealed indignation in his tones.

Clara said no more, but covering her face, sat down and wept aloud.

"It's no such thing!" exclaimed Henry, as he walked about the floor—"She's not a vulgar minded girl! I like her better than any girl I know. And I think it was right down cruel in father—so I do! Suppose her father has failed in business? Does that make her any worse? I don't see that it does."

To all this Clara made no answer. Her heart was too full. To think that her own father should be thus unkind to the unfortunate! Oh, how deeply it did grieve her!

As for Grace, she was able to keep her tears back only until she closed the door of Mr. Links behind her. We will not portray her feelings as she went slowly and thoughtfully homeward. It was some distance to her father's house, and she had time for reflection. Had her mother been near her at the first overflow of her feelings, she would have thrown herself upon her bosom and there sobbed away the violence of her grief. But, ere she had reached home, her brave young spirit began to nerve itself to endure the trouble alone.

"It will only pain mother," said she; "and she has enough to bear."

Thus feeling and thinking, she returned home. Several times during the evening, it seemed to her as if she must unburden her heart to her mother. But, she suffered on alone, and remained silent.—Thus early was she learning her lessons in the new school of life.

The meeting between Grace and Clara on the next day was a painful one, and embarrassing to both. They had little to say to each other; but the manner of each expressed regard, and was full of tenderness. Instead of estrangement being the result of Mr. Links'

effort to separate the two young friends, it only drove them closer together. A new bond was thrown around them, which was cemented by mutual pain. Such a bond is not easily broken.

A few months after this visit of Clara, Mr. Links, who seemed actually to hate Mr. Wilkins and his family, and to desire to do them harm, accidentally learned that his daughter and Grace sat beside each other at school. Immediately he wrote a note to Mr. ———, desiring, for reasons particular to himself, that Clara should be given a different desk from the one she occupied. The change was accordingly made, greatly to the injury of Clara, who had been stimulated by Grace to apply herself more intensely than she had ever done before, and who was receiving, in her daily intercourse with the pure-minded girl, a fund of good feelings and good principles. The young lady, beside whom she was now placed, was idle, frivolous, and inclined to be ill-natured in her remarks about others. Not possessing, naturally, much firmness of Character, Clara was easily acted upon by those into whose company she was thrown; and she was, accordingly, much influenced by this new companion with whom she was in constant intercourse. She no longer recited her lessons perfectly, as had been the case since her more intimate association with Grace, and as far from being as happy as while striving to follow the precepts and imitate the good example of her gentle, right-minded friend.

"Clara;" said Mr. ——— to her, a few days after the change was made. "You are getting back again into your old bad habits. I am sorry for this. You haven't said a lesson well since——"

"You changed my seat." Clara finished the sentence for him. "Let me go back again to my old place?"

"Along side of Grace Wilkins."

"Yes sir."

The teacher shook his head.

"Did father tell you to change my seat?" enquired Clara.

Mr. ——— did not answer this question; but his manner satisfied Clara that her suspicions were correct.

"If you'd prefer not sitting beside Anna Wheeler, I can give you another place," said Mr. ———.

"I'd rather sit by Grace."

Mr. ——— shook his head.

"Then I don't want to change. I like Anna well enough."

"But you are neglecting your lessons."

"I always did that until I sat beside of Grace Wilkins; and I suppose I will continue to do it. I can't study now."

"You must try, Clara."

"I do try, but it's of no use. Anna keeps putting so many things into my head."

"Then I must separate you," said Mr. ———.

He did so; but the result was no better. Clara needed the influence of just such a one as Grace;—Deprived of this influence, her mind wandered from the better purposes by which it had been ef-

fectcd. Still, the presence of Grace in the school, and their frequent intercourse, was highly useful to her; and she often found herself stimulated to industry by a word or two, timely spoken. After school was dismissed, they often walked a few squares together, homeward.

"Clara," said Mr. Links, one evening, speaking sternly. "Was that the daughter of Wilkins, I saw with you in the street to-day?" This was nearly a year after the failure of Mr. Wilkins.

"Yes sir," replied Clara.

"Havn't I positively forbidden you to keep company with that girl?"

Clara dropped her eyes to the floor and stood silent.

"I'll put a stop to this," said Mr. Links, "cost what it may! If Mr. ——— will have girls like that in his school, he shall not have mine. You will please not to go back again to-morrow."

Clara looked up into her father's face with an expression of surprise.

"You understand me, I presume?"

"Yes sir," replied the daughter, "But, father ———."

"I wish to hear nothing on the subject," was the peremptory answer, and Mr. Links turned angrily away and left the room. He was in earnest in what he said. Possessing a strong will and a resoluteness of purpose, when he once entered upon a course of action nothing could swerve him to the right hand, or the left.

Clara did not return to Mr. ———'s school; but was sent off some fifty miles from home to a fashionable seminary, much against the will of her mother.

Thus far, the selfish, ill-natured, hard-hearted policy pursued by Mr. Links towards his debtor and his family, had re-acted upon himself in evil consequences. His own peace of mind was disturbed, and his family, to a certain extent, made unhappy. The removal of Clara to a boarding school was against the will of her mother, who dreaded the consequences likely to follow. She knew the temptations to which a young and giddy girl like Clara would be subjected, and trembled for the result. The opposition which she felt called upon to make, when the change was proposed, aroused the impatient spirit of her husband, who spoke to her with a degree of unkindness on the occasion that almost broke her heart. Thus was peace destroyed at home, and the family circle broken. But, the worst consequences that followed the persecuting spirit indulged by Mr. Links, were suffered by Clara. To her, the companionship of Grace would have been every thing. How much she lost by the separation, the sad sequel will show.

CHAPTER IX.

WE pass over five years in the history of those we have introduced to the reader. Five years rarely go by without important changes.

Mr. Wilkins is still President of the ——— Insurance Company, and in receipt of the comfortable salary of two thousand dollars. Firm in his purpose to educate his children thoroughly, he has spared no expense within the limit of his income, in seeking to obtain so important an end. Grace exhibited, early, a fine talent for music, which was developed under the care of the best teachers that could be procured. In the school of Mr. ———, where she continued until she completed her eighteenth year, she bore off the highest honors. In time, her father's misfortunes were forgotten by her school-mates, and she became a favorite with nearly all. Wherever she moved, there was sunshine; not such as sparkles and dazzles as it strikes upon the rippling water; but such as lies calm and beautiful on some peaceful landscape. Now, in her nineteenth summer, she is a lovely young woman, delighting all by her intelligence, that takes a new charm from her sweet, retiring modesty. At home, she is the light and joy of the whole household; abroad, in the limited circle to which she has been introduced, the favorite of every one.

The result, in the case of Clara Links, it pains us to say is different. In the boarding school to which she was sent, she formed associations of a depressing rather than elevating character, and imbibed many false views dangerous, for a rather weak-minded girl to entertain. She is in her nineteenth year, and still at school, but not long to remain there.

One evening, about this period, we find Mr. Links alone in the family sitting room, evidently much troubled in feeling. He remained thus alone for, perhaps, half an hour, sometimes walking about, restlessly, and sometimes so still in his chair that he seemed like a statue. The door at length opened, and his wife came in and sat down by his side.

"How does Willy seem now?" asked Mr. Links, in a low anxious voice.

"He's asleep; but, I do not think him any better,"

Mr. Links sighed heavily.

"What did the Doctor say, when he was here this afternoon?" he enquired.

He looked grave and said but little.

"Did you ask him what he thought about Willy?"

"Yes; but he gave some indirect answer."

Mr. Links sighed again.

There was silence for some time, when a hollow-sounding cough was heard from the adjoining room.

"Oh dear! How that cough of Henry's does distress me!" exclaimed Mrs. Links. "I cannot bear to hear it."

Mr. Links responded only by a deeper sigh than he had yet uttered.

Then followed another long period of silence, which was at length broken by Mrs. Links, who said—

"Don't you think we'd better take Clara home. She's getting too old to be away from us. There are dangers for one of her age and temperament in a boarding school."

"Just what I have been thinking about all day. Yes. We had better write for her to come home. I heard something about that school this morning, that didn't just please me."

"Indeed! What was it?"

"A gentleman told me that his daughter went there for a few months, when he took her away."

"For what reason?"

"There were too many visitors permitted to enter the school."

"What kind of visitors?"

"Young gentlemen."

"Why Herman! Surely the Principal would not permit a thing like this."

"The person I talked with said that he knew the practice to exist; and, moreover, said, that almost every year some young lady was enticed away into an imprudent and often wretched marriage."

Mrs. Links clasped her hands together, while an expression of anguish settled upon her face.

"Such a thing would kill me," said she. "Oh, write for Clara to come home immediately! How often have I regretted her removal from the school of Mr. ———. Had she remained there, we could have protected her from the many evils to which her absence from home has doubtless exposed her."

Instantly the thought of Mr. Links reverted to Grace Wilkins, and his anger towards her and her father was re-kindled. Had he uttered what was in his mind, the words would have been—

"But for Wilkins, this evil would never have befallen us!"

A servant now entered the room and said that there was a man below who wished to see Mr. Links.

"Who is he?" enquired the merchant.

"I do not know, sir. He looks like a countryman."

"Ask him what he wishes, John."

The servant left the room, and returned in a few moments with a letter. Mr. Links eagerly broke the seal, and read—

"MY DEAR SIR.—It becomes my painful duty to inform you that your daughter has been absent since last evening, when, I am informed, that she was seen in company with a gentleman who has more than once intruded himself upon the Pupils in my Seminary, and whose presence here I have positively interdicted. As the mail does not leave until to-night, I have thought it best to despatch this information by a private messenger, in order that it may reach you

as early as possible. Thus far, I am able to gain no intelligence as to the purpose of your daughter in leaving, nor do I know in what direction she has gone. I use the utmost precaution in order to guard those under my charge from dangers of this kind; but, I am told that Clara has been in the habit of meeting this person, daily, in her walk for exercise and re-creation, during the past few months. His name is Paulette."

"Paulette!" exclaimed Mr. Links, as the letter fell to the floor.

"Paulette!" responded Mrs. Links, in a voice of agony, as she seized the letter and eagerly read the first few lines. She needed to peruse it no farther. She understood all, and her heart shrunk under the sudden pressure of a great calamity. With a groan, she fell from her chair insensible.

Paulette was known to both the parents too well. He was an unprincipled adventurer, who had, for the past year or two, been seeking to form an advantageous alliance with some wealthy family through false pretences in regard to his own social standing, and worldly possessions. Twice during that time had he nearly affected his purpose of enticing into a marriage some weak minded school-girl. Now he was successful; and their daughter was the victim. With their family had the alliance been made. The certainty of this fact, for Mr. Links did not in the least doubt that a marriage had taken place, almost drove the merchant beside himself. But the condition of his wife, whom he had caught in his arms as she fell fainting to the floor, brought back his thoughts from the calamity which had just been announced.

Nearly an hour elapsed, ere the heart-stricken mother was restored to consciousness. In the mean time, Mr. Lane had seen the messenger who brought him the letter but gained no new light on the subject of his daughter's absence from any questions directed to him.

On the next morning, Mr. Lane would have started for the school from which his daughter had gone off, in order to see what information could be elicited from her companions, but, through the night, Willy, his youngest child, now about nine years of age, became worse, and by morning was so low that even the physician thought him in a dying condition.

When Henry, the oldest brother, who had attained his majority a few weeks before, learned what his sister had done—which was not until the next day, the fact, from motives of prudence, being concealed from him, as he was in extremely delicate health—the excitement occasioned thereby was so great that he ruptured a small blood vessel, and was immediately ordered into bed by the family physician, with strict injunction, as he valued to his life, to keep perfectly quiet.

Oh, how wretched was the heart of Herman Links!—wretched beyond what can be realized without an effort of the imagination. It was more wretched still, ere the dawning of another day, for in the night that followed, the spirit of his youngest, and, if there were a difference in his affection, his best beloved, passed through the door of death into the world of eternal life.

"Death! How its occurrence subdues and chastens the heart; breaking down its animosities and quieting its angry throes. Mr. Links was walking the floor of the parlor on the morning that followed the departure of Willy, musing sadly over the crushing sorrow that had come suddenly upon them, when he heard the voice of his daughter Clara in the hall eagerly enquiring of the servant who had admitted her, why there was a sign of death at the door.

"Willy!" he heard her exclaim, in a tone of anguish that found an echo deep in his own heart. Then the door of the room swung open, and she came in and throwing herself upon her father's bosom, hid her face and wept loud and passionately.

The first impulse of Mr. Links was to fling his daughter from him, angrily. But, grief had subdued his heart. Willy—dear Willy!—was dead. The loved of all: the pet and play-fellow of all, had been taken away; and the spirit of the stern man was broken. Still, he did not return the embrace of his child; and, in a few moments, gradually disengaged the arms she had thrown about him, saying, as he did so, with a coldness that chilled her feelings.

"Your mother is in her own room."

The daughter receded a pace or two, and then turning from her father, glided, with swift steps, from the apartment. Under what distressing circumstances had the weak and foolish girl returned to her father's house!

"Oh my child! My child!" exclaimed Mrs. Links, as Clara entered; unannounced, the chamber where she sat buried in a grief so overwhelming, that it almost displaced her reason. She opened her arms as she spoke, and instantly Clara was clasped to her heart in a wild, clinging embrace. As soon as the mother grew calm, she said, with her lips close to the ear of Clara.

"My daughter; a dreadful affliction has come upon us. Our darling Willy is dead!"

Sobs choked her utterance for a few moments. Then she added, in a solemn voice—

"God grant, my child, that we have not a greater affliction to bear! Where have you been? How do you return to us Clara?"

"A lawful wife," returned Clara, in a whisper.

"The wife of whom."

"Of Mr. Paulette."

A groan so deep and shuddering came from the mother's breast, that it almost curdled the blood in her daughter's veins.

A long silence followed. Then Clara said—

"Mother, Mr. Paulette is ——"

"Speak not of *him* to me Clara," quickly answered Mrs. Links, with something of indignation in her voice. "At least not *now*."

We will not attempt to picture, further, the distressing embarrassment which marked the intercourse of Clara with her father and mother, during the three days that intervened between her return home and the time when the beautiful remains of Willy were

carried forth to the burial. It was painful in the extreme, as may well be imagined.

It was the purpose of Clara, when she came home, to avow to her parents what she had done, beg their forgiveness, and ask them to receive kindly the man whose wife she had become. All his representations as to himself, she had fully credited; and did not, therefore, believe that any very strong objections to him as her husband would exist. Paulette assured her, that a formal application for her hand had been made by him, and that the only objection urged, was her age. This being the case, to precipitate the marriage she thought would hardly be looked upon as an unpardonable offence. But, the shuddering groan with which her mother received the announcement that she was married, chilled her feelings. There was a meaning in it that she did not understand.

It had been the intention of Mr. Paulette, to come and ask for Clara a few hours after he left her at the door of her father's house—this was arranged between them—and then to enter, or go away as she might think was best. The mourning weeds upon the door, startling both of them, changed this purpose.

"Do not come. I will see you," said Clara hurriedly, as they parted.

Three days went by, and Clara did not return to the hotel where her husband had taken rooms; nor did he even receive a note from her. This was explained to him by the intelligence of little Willy's death, which he received immediately after parting with Arma. Still, he did not like so prolonged an absence, and felt restless in consequence. On the fourth day, Clara made her appearance, looking so changed that he hardly recognized her.

"Why Clara!" he exclaimed, springing to meet her, as she entered the private parlor where he happened to be. "How long you have staid!"

Clara looked into his face for some moments, with sad eyes, and lips that essayed in vain to speak.

Paulette drew his arm around her and said—

"Dear Clara! My heart has deeply sympathized with you and your family in the painful loss sustained."

The wild burst of grief to which she now gave way, made words of no avail, and Paulette became again silent. When the storm of feeling at length subsided, he said, in a voice of sympathy.—

"How does your mother bear this great affliction?"

"It has almost broken her heart," sobbed Clara.

"And your father?"

Clara did not answer, for her tears flowed again, and her whole frame shook violently.

"How were you received?" Paulette at length ventured to enquire.

Clara was silent.

"Was your father angry?"

Still there was no answer. But the poor afflicted child shrunk closer to the one she had chosen as her protector. The meaning of

this was partly guessed by her husband, and he said, in a voice that extorted an answer—

“You spoke of our marriage?”

“Yes,” murmured the unhappy bride.

“And what did they say?”

“They gave me but one election.”

“What?” This was asked in a quick, eager voice.

“Between you and them?”

“Explain your meaning, Clara.”

“My father says that you shall never cross his threshold. Oh! his anger was terrible!”

“He will get over this,” said Paulette. “How does your mother feel?”

“She would not bear the utterance of your name; and has done nothing but weep since I returned.”

“All this will pass away in time.”

“No; I fear not,” returned Clara. “They have imbibed a strong prejudice against you.”

“What do they say?”

“Oh, dreadful things!” replied Clara in a low, choking voice.

“Dreadful things!”

“They did not call me a thief or a robber,” said Paulette, indignantly.

“Oh, no, no! But I didn’t believe what they said.”

“And they gave you your choice between a separation from me or them?”

“Yes; and I came to you of course, for, you are my husband, and I will cling to you through evil and good report,” replied Clara, gazing into his face with a look of love that smiled through veiling tears.

Paulette could do no less than bend down and kiss her lips; but the kiss was cold, and sent a chill to the heart of Clara.

“You will see them again?” said he, after a silence of some moments.

This question caused the tears of Clara to flow afresh. As soon as she could answer, she replied.

“I had my choice to remain or go. ‘If you remain,’ said my father, ‘your separation from the man you have wedded must be complete. He never crosses this threshold; and you are never to meet him except as a stranger. If you go, you are his wife, but no longer my child. Choose your own way; but, remember, that when you have entered it, there is no return. *“I have chosen my way!”*’

As Clara said this, she laid her cheek upon her husband’s bosom, and looked up tenderly into his face.

“This is the first impulse of anger,” replied Paulette, with more of disappointment in his voice than he wished to exhibit.

“No,—It is the expressed purpose of a man whose stern feelings but rarely change.”

“You will see him again Clara?”

"Not unless he sends for me."

"Will not this be stubbornness on your part?" asked Paulette, with something like rebuke in his manner.

"Stubbornness! You do not know my father, Mr. Paulette! If it would be of any avail, I would go on my knees to him. But, were I to do so, he would turn from me as coldly as if I were only a statue."

"Cannot your mother influence him?"

"Not in this."

"How does she feel?"

"She would not hear your name from my lips."

"What does your brother say?"

"I was not permitted to see him?"

"Why?"

"When he heard of our marriage, he was so excited that he ruptured a blood vessel, and has been very low ever since. The doctor said that a meeting with me might cause his life."

"Well! this is a nice business!" exclaimed Paulette, giving, almost involuntarily utterance to his feelings, and speaking in a tone of blended disappointment and regret.

"Do not feel grieved for me," said Clara. "I have chosen my way, and it is to go with you through life. If my parents and friends turn from you, the act will only drive me closer to your side. If all the world should reject us, we will be the world unto each other."

"A nice business indeed!" murmured Paulette, so occupied with his own thoughts that he scarcely heard the words of Clara, for whom he did not, for he could not, feel the first motions of love. He had married her on speculation—nothing more. Too idle and thriftless to force his way to the elevated position in society he was emulous to obtain, he had deliberately purposed to effect this object through a marriage connexion with some wealthy family. Foiled in two or three attempts of the kind, he had become pretty well known to parents with marriageable daughters; and he found, therefore, his efforts to accomplish the end in view not so easy a matter. Towards Clara Links, he had turned his eyes for some time, his mind all the while in debate as to the propriety of making an alliance with her family. Her father was known to be wealthy: but had the reputation of being a hard sort of a man. He was rather afraid of him. But, as his own affairs were growing more and more desperate every day, and it seemed almost impossible to continue much longer his system of swindling tradesmen and hotel keepers, he thought it best to secure the prize that he was not mistaken in believing was easily to be won. So he came to the young and foolish girl with his false pretensions, which she was weak enough to believe. And here was the result.

Disengaging himself from Clara, who still leaned against him, Paulette arose and walked the floor with knit brows and compressed lips for many minutes, during which time the eyes of Clara followed him steadily about the room with a surprised and troubled look. It was then that the first suspicions of an improper motive on his part

in seeking an alliance with her, flashed upon her mind. Instantly she repelled the thought. But, as she continued to look upon the strangely altered face of her husband, the suspicion came stealing back again.

Conscious, at length, that he was betraying himself too far, and unable to disguise his feelings, Paulette went hurriedly from the room. For a long time Clara sat motionless. She was not only bewildered, but startled by the strange conduct of her husband. He had been pronounced by her father a penniless adventurer without honor, honesty, or a spark of manly feeling. Was this a mere burst of angry feeling? Or, was it indeed so! These questions intruded themselves, and she could not thrust them aside. If she were willing to give up her home and parents for his sake, why should he be so disturbed at their refusal to acknowledge him? It was too evident, that something besides a regard for her in the matter, agitated the mind of her husband.

Half an hour after, when Paulette returned, he found Clara sitting where he had left her. She lifted her head, slowly, as he entered the room, and looked at him with a strange, fixed look.

"Clara, dear Clara!" said he as he sat down by her side, taking her hand, as he spoke—

Just at that moment two men entered the room, accompanied by the hotel keeper.

"That is the person you are in search of," said the latter, pointing towards Paulette, who sprung to his feet.

"We arrest you" said one of the men, advancing, and laying his hand upon Paulette, "on a charge of forgery."

Paulette grew instantly pale, and staggering backwards, sunk upon a chair.

"Oh no, no! It cannot be!" exclaimed the young wife, starting forward.

"I am sorry to say, madam," returned one of the officers, respectfully, "that the charge is too true."

Clara stood like one stupified with a blow for some moments, and then dropped to the floor insensible. When next her senses were unlocked, she found herself in her own chamber, in her father's house, and her mother sitting by her side, gazing upon her with weeping eyes.

CHAPTER X.

WE pass over a few years more. Of Paulette, we will merely say, that the charge of forgery was fully proved against him, and that he was sentenced to an expiatory term in the State prison. Clara is still living, and is the mother of a beautiful boy; but, alas! his father is a condemned felon!

Henry, whose health was in an alarming state, is still delicate.—Physicians who were consulted on the subject, all agreed that he must not adopt a profession, to which he was inclined, as confinement and close study would destroy him. He, therefore, entered his father's store and gave a moderate degree of attention to business. But, like Clara, he was destined to disappoint and almost madden his father. Grace Wilkins, by virtue of her fine personal and mental endowments, her superior education and accomplishments, won her way into some of the best circles in the city, where Henry met her frequently. As a child, she had been his favorite, and, as she grew up towards womanhood, and, charm after charm developed itself, his feelings went out towards her with a fonder impulse. In a word, he became her lover, and her heart sweetly reciprocated the affection.

As for the family of Mr. Wilkins, that has not escaped the visitation of sorrow. Edward, the only son, had been dead for more than a year; and the father's health has been, for some time, steadily failing. Indeed, so rapid has been this decline, of late; that serious alarm is beginning to be felt by all.

"Henry," said Mr. Links to his son one day, about this time. "What lady was that you were walking with this morning. There was something familiar in her face; and yet, I cannot recollect where I have seen her?"

"That was Miss Wilkins," replied the young man, showing a slight degree of embarrassment.

"What Miss Wilkins?" There was a change in the father's tone of voice.

"She is the daughter of Manly Wilkins."

If a viper hand stung Mr. Links, he could not have started more suddenly than he did.

"Henry!" he exclaimed, looking sternly at the young man. "Henry! Can this be possible?"

"Can what be possible, father?"

"That you value yourself so little as to keep company with the daughter of Wilkins."

"I have met no one so worthy of all respect and esteem as Grace Wilkins," replied Henry, in a firm voice, "And as for her father —"

"Henry!" exclaimed Mr. Links, excited beyond measure by a circumstance so unexpected, "I will hear nothing of this man or his

family! And, moreover, I now forbid, positively, on pain of my severest displeasure, any association with the young lady in whose company I saw you to-day. How you could so lower yourself passes my comprehension!"

"Father," replied the young man, who possessed considerable independence of character. "I will deal frankly and honestly with you in this matter. Will you hear what I have to say, calmly and give my words a due consideration?"

An impatient answer was on the tongue of Mr. Links; but, he controlled himself, and looked, instead of uttering, his consent to hear.

"The daughter of Mr. Wilkins is a young lady whose beauty, education and accomplishments, elevate her, personally, above most of those who move in our best circles. When she was a little girl, I liked her better than any one I met; and, since I have become a man, I have seen no one who has interested me half so much. Not only is she a lady in all external graces and endowments; but she is one in a higher and more important sense,—She has a heart full of the best and purest impulses. Father! If you only knew her, you would cease to feel as you do towards her family."

"Henry," said Mr. Links, in a quick voice. "What relations exist between you and this wonderful daughter of Mr. Wilkins?"

"I am not sure that I understand you."

"In a word, then; are you under engagement of marriage to her! Have you committed that folly?"

"No engagement exists," replied the young man.

"It is well. See that none is formed," said Mr. Links, severely.

"But, father, if she be worthy, in every way, of my affection—If I can feel interest in none besides—and all this is true—What then?"

"Worthy!" There was an expression of unutterable scorn, in the voice of Mr. Links. "Worthy! To hear this from your lips, Henry! There is not a family in our whole city, high or low, rich or poor, for which I have so bitter a contempt as for that of Wilkins. And, I have reason. I know the man and his quality."

"You do not know his daughter," said Henry.

"I know that she insulted your sister at school years ago; and that I removed Clara on that very account."

"And Clara will tell you, father, that the insult was only imagined on her part. That, of all her young companions, she esteemed Grace the highest of all. Moreover, she has declared to me, again and again, that, had she been suffered to remain under the good influence of Grace, she never would have been led aside into an error that has disgraced our family, and rendered her own life a burden. Grace was filling her heart with good impulses and good resolutions, when you separated them, and she was thrown into the companionship of young girls whose precepts and example were of the worst kind."

But Mr. Links moved his hand impatiently; saying—

"I will hear no more of this!"

Filial respect and indignation struggled, for a few moments, in the breast of Henry, and then, without further remark, he turned from his father and walked slowly away.

There were two reasons why Mr. Links, was disturbed by this avowed preference of Henry for Grace Wilkins. The first the reader comprehends. The second was because it came in the face of a desire on his part that Henry should form an alliance with the daughter of a merchant named Carson. This connection he considered most advantageous for Henry, as Mr. Carson was one of the merchant princes of the city, and had but a single child, who would most probably inherit all his wealth. He had taken some pains to propitiate the good feelings of Mr. Carson, and felt pretty sure, that if Henry would step forward and do all that was required on his part, nothing would hinder the accomplishment of his wishes.

But, Henry had other views on the subject of marriage.

A maiden had found favor in his eyes who could not be set aside for one whose chief attractions were wealth and family connections.

Not many weeks after this interview between Mr. Links and his son, the latter called upon Mr. Wilkins, at whose house he had visited a few times of late, and made a formal offer for the hand of Grace.

"Does your father know of this?" enquired Mr. Wilkins, who had not forgotten his interviews with Mr. Links.

"It is a matter that concerns me and not my father," replied Henry.

"It concerns you, primarily, of course," said Mr. Wilkins, "But it also concerns your family. I have reason to believe that your father would not approve of your marriage to my daughter."

Henry was silent.

"Have you spoken to him on the subject?"

"I have."

"And he will not listen to you."

"It does not meet his approval, I own," said the young man.

"Then it does not meet mine," returned Mr. Wilkins. "A marriage, under such circumstances, can only bring trouble. I love my daughter, and desire not only to secure for her every possible blessing, but to save her from all the evil consequences likely to result from unwise actions."

"But, in a matter like this, Mr. Wilkins," said Henry, "shall any considerations be higher than a mutual preference? It is not my father who is seeking a marriage union, but myself; and shall I not regard, rather, a moral fitness in the person than his prejudices? And, if the one towards whom I am attracted reciprocates what I feel, is it right for her friends to say nay, because I am subjected to an unjust opposition?"

"But, do you not see, my young friend," replied Mr. Wilkins, "What a world of trouble you will make for yourself? Your father is not a man who changes easily. If he oppose you now, he will oppose you to the end. Your marriage to my daughter will produce

family estrangement, and consequent unhappiness. This is inevitable."

"Unhappiness of a more serious character will result if obstructions are placed in our way. Deny the boon I ask, and my heart will be wretched. Mine, Mr. Wilkins, is no suddenly formed preference. I felt it when Grace was but twelve years old, and I a mere stripling. That preference has grown with my growth and strengthened with my strength, and now, to love her has become a part of my life. My father's pride objects. But, shall pride step in and effect so great a sacrifice? Shall pride be suffered to destroy what is good and true and holy? No—no—do not say that, Mr. Wilkins!"

The father of Grace was struck with the manner as well as the avowal of Henry Links. His impression was, that the young man had suddenly become enamored of his lovely child, and in the first impulse of passion, pressed forward to claim her hand. But, in this, it now appeared, he was in error. The preference was more deeply laid.

"Is Grace aware of your feelings towards her," asked Mr. Wilkins.

"She is."

"Does she return them?"

"She does."

Mr. Wilkin's did not reply for some time. He then said—

"I hardly know what to say, Mr. Links. Your father does not feel kindly towards me, and a marriage between you and Grace, effected without his approval, will only increase his anger. I might not be effected by this; but you and Grace would feel it most painfully."

"But less painfully than a separation, Mr. Wilkins."

"I must think over this Mr. Links. It is by far too weighty a matter to admit of a hurried decision. Let me, in the mean time, ask you one or two questions. You are of legal age?"

"Oh yes. I attained my majority several years ago?"

"You are aware that I am poor, so far as worldly goods are concerned?"

"I am fully acquainted with your circumstances, Mr. Wilkins."

"My income, sufficient for the comfortable support of my family, depends entirely on my health and life. The one is failing rapidly, and the other is uncertain. While I live and retain my health, all will be well for those I love; but I fear, sometimes, that I shall not be with them long. Now, let me ask you, if you have an income independent of your father?"

"I am worth the sum of twenty thousand dollars, left to me by my maternal grandfather. It was invested by him in stocks, where it yet remains."

"Are you connected in business with your father?"

"No. He has talked some of late, however, about assigning me an interest. At present, he credits me for services rendered in the business, about a thousand dollars a year."

"In a week," said Mr. Wilkins, "I will be prepared to speak further with you on this subject."

The young man went away, not doubting that, when he next saw the father of Grace, his application for her hand would meet a favorable response. In this he was not mistaken. Nor did Mr. Wilkins err as to the angry opposition that would be made by Mr. Links.

But, of all the trials through which the young couple had to pass in consequence of this opposition, it is not our purpose here to speak. So deeply incensed was Mr. Links, when he found that Henry was bent on marrying Grace, and so violent was he in his opposition, that the young man was fairly driven from his place of business. When the marriage at length took place, it wrought a complete separation between Henry and his father.

"You have chosen your own way," said the latter. "And you must walk in it. Expect nothing from me, for you will receive nothing."

Mr. Links meant what he said.

From the time of Henry's marriage, began an entire estrangement between him and his father. The mother took a different view and acted differently. Both she and Clara called upon Grace immediately, and both were charmed in the first interview. But no effort of theirs could in the least influence the unyielding father, whose pride and anger neither time nor reflection could mitigate. In them, affection for Grace grew stronger daily; for, the oftener they met her the more did they find in her to love; while the antipathy of Mr. Links grew stronger, as he felt more and more deeply the separation that had been wrought between him and his son.

Soon after his marriage, Henry Links commenced business for himself. He had, as just mentioned a capital of twenty thousand dollars, and the whole of this was invested in the new enterprize.

Years went rapidly by; though not without events of painful interest. The health of Mr. Wilkins gradually declined, and five years after his daughter's marriage, he passed to another and a better life. Not long did his wife survive him. Mary, the only sister of Grace, was married a short time before her father's death, and now resided in the West. Grace was left alone with her husband; no, not alone, for two dear babes had come to bless their union.

But, there came, in time, still other changes. Carson, the Merchant with whose family Mr. Links had desired to form an alliance by the marriage of Henry to his daughter, a vulgar, ignorant, ill-tempered girl, when compared with Grace,—Carson, reputed to be one of the most substantial Merchants in the city, in standing too high, "chanced to fall," and in falling not only "dashed himself to pieces," but crushed others beneath him. In this disaster, Mr. Links was hopelessly involved. For a time he struggled madly with his fate, making giant efforts to recover himself, but only sacrificing the interests of others in doing so, until finally, he sunk in the deep waters that were rushing and roaring about him.

The fall of Carson and Links was but the beginning of troubles in

the world of commerce; it was the first *sough* of wind that preluded the coming storm. There had been a series of prosperous years, so called, in which a thousand frail barks had been launched upon the smooth sea of trade, while those more substantial had been lured by fair winds and cloudless skies to crowd on every strip of canvas.— Suddenly, and with warning's that reached only the most attentive and practised eye and ear, the tempest came, and strewed the ocean with wrecks. In this general scene of ruin, it is not surprising that Henry Links went down with the rest. He, too, had been tempted to spread his sails, and go forth upon strange waters.

CHAPTER XI.

THE more earnest and laborious attention to business which Henry Links had been compelled to give, after his separation from his father, tried, severely his health, that had always been delicate! In a year or two the effect began to show itself in a way that alarmed the fears of his wife. When he found himself suddenly involved in difficulties, coming as these did so soon after the shock produced by his father's failure, the anxiety, and even terror with which he was affected as he looked at the overwhelming evil that was sweeping toward him, added to the care and effort involved in a struggle almost as severe as if it had been for life, made sad inroads upon his feeble constitution. When the last unsuccessful effort to sustain himself, failed, and the little fortune he was laboring so hard to build up, fell with a stunning crash, he sunk also. Nature had been taxed too severely, and could bear up no longer.

On the day that Henry Links, yielding to the pressure, against which he had braced himself for months, gave way, he went home, looking so pale and broken both in body and mind, that Grace started as he entered the room where she was sitting, and exclaimed.

"Henry! What has happened? Are you sick, or hurt? Oh, my husband! What ails you?"

The young man, overcome by a sense of weakness, leaned heavily against his wife, as she sprung to his side, and drew her arm around him. But, he did not, at first, make any answer.

"Oh, Henry! Tell me what happened?" eagerly pleaded Grace.

"More ruin," said Henry, in a husky whisper.

"How? What?"

"I am ruined, Grace," replied Henry, in a firm voice, but with indescribable anguish.

"Ruined! Oh, no! I am here; and there are our sweet babes!" quickly answered Grace, who comprehended her husband's meaning. He had not told her of the crushing weight that was on him; but, from the fact that his father had recently failed in business, and that

failures were occurring daily ; and still further, from the fact that he had been greatly troubled about something for weeks, she looked for just the result to him that had taken place. She, therefore, understood, all that was meant by the word ruin.

"But for you and these sweet babes, I would not care."

His utterance was choked by emotion, he leaned his face down until it was hidden on the shoulder of his wife, while a half stifled sob came up from his troubled bosom.

Grace stood with her arm drawn tightly around her husband for a few minutes ; then she gently led him to a seat, and taking another by his side, leaned forward towards him, and looking up into his troubled countenance, said—

"Henry, my dear, dear husband ! Do not let one thought of me, as destined to share your future lot, be it what it may, give you the first throb of pain. It will not be hard to shrink away, with our little ones, from our present place in society, and draw closer and more lovingly together in the humbler position which an all-wise and good Providence may think it best for us to take. If an abundance of the world's good things are withheld, we can limit our wants and be just as happy as we were before. Do not, therefore, let the hand of misfortune, though it be laid heavily upon you, sink you to the earth. It need not do so. It cannot crush me ; and if I bear up ; what can crush you ?"

But, the spirits of the young man were broken in the struggle through which he had come, and the hopeful words of his wife failed to re-assure him. He felt, what she did not clearly at the time understand, his own helplessness from failure of bodily health. She knew that his health had been declining ; but, she did not yet know that strength which had borne him up for months was an artificial strength, and that now, the stimulus of hope and effort being gone, he sunk down weak and trembling in every exhausted nerve.

"God bless you my dear Grace !" said he mournfully, "for your words of encouragement. But alas ! they inspire me with no hope. My strength is gone. I have no more ability to struggle in the world. I have no power even to hold myself up ; how much less the dear ones I love !"

"Lean against me," replied Grace, promptly, and with a lightness of tone that concealed the real pressure on her feelings. "If you are weak then will I be strong."

"You ! Dear child !" said Henry, with much tenderness. "You know little of the world's severe pressure. Ah ! How quickly will both you and I fall, when the hand of adversity, now outstretched, is laid upon us."

"No, Henry ! We will not fall," replied Grace, confidently.—
"The same kind Father is still in Heaven, and He will give us strength sufficient for our day."

Thus Grace sought to inspire with hope the drooping mind of her husband. But, ere many hours passed, her own heart was stricken with fear. It soon became too apparent, that Henry was ill in body

as well as in mind. He could not touch food when placed before him, and his exhaustion was so great that he was unable to sit up. Grace sent for their physician, who expressed concern the moment he saw him; and this was increased when Grace explained the reason of her husband's illness.

"He has considerable fever," said the physician in reply to the wife's eager questions, as she followed him from the room in which her husband lay.

"Is he dangerous?" asked Grace with quivering lips.

"I hope not. His brain and body have been overtaken, and now there has come a consequent great prostration of the whole nervous system. Quiet and medicine will, I trust, do all that is needful for him. But, Mrs. Links, let me impress upon you one thing. All will depend on his being kept perfectly free from excitement. As you value his life, let no causes of disturbance come near him. Should any persons call, as is most likely under present circumstances, tell them that I have given positive orders that he is not, at least for the present, to be seen."

The physician's judgment of the case, from the first symptoms that were presented, was correct. A slow nervous fever set in, and, for many days, the contest between life and the agents of dissolution, was a severe one; and when the turning point came, and life gained strength in the vital regions, he was weak almost as a new born infant. Slowly, very slowly, came back a portion of the strength that had been lost—and only a portion. It was weeks before Henry was able to sit up in bed, and weeks more ere he could move about his chamber.

In the mean time, Grace had held repeated interviews with two or three gentlemen who represented the creditors of her husband, as to the settlement of the business, which was hopelessly embarrassed.—All his effects were in their hands, and they placed before her, at her request, a full statement of every thing, at the same time desiring her to send for her husband's legal counsellor, in order that she might have his advice and judgment in a matter so far out of the range of her peculiar province. This was done; and, acting under his advice, for her husband, she consented to the various propositions made for the settlement of affairs in the best and speediest way!"

One of the gentlemen who came frequently to see Mrs. Links on the business of her husband, a Mr. Markle, soon began to feel in her a lively interest. Her calmness and self-devotion, in the painful and trying circumstances by which she was surrounded, and her earnest desire that justice might be done to all, gave him a high respect for her character.

"And now madam," said Mr. Markle to her one day, after nearly all the business was arranged, so far as her agency in the matter was involved—"What are your prospects for the future? Your husband's health is so shattered that it is but little he will be able to do towards the maintenance of his family. His father's circumstances are as

bad as his own. There is no dependence, therefore, on him. Have you any friends to fall back upon?"

"None," replied Grace with more calmness than Mr. Markle had expected under the circumstances.

"Upon what, then, is your dependence?" asked Mr. Markle.

"On Heaven, and my own efforts."

A flash of holy confidence lit up for an instant the features of the young wife, as if rays from the heaven she trusted in had fallen upon them.

"What can you do?" enquired Mr. Markle.

"My father gave me every advantage in his power," replied Grace.

"He believed that his first duty in life was to provide for the highest good of his children; and, with this view, he had them thoroughly taught in the best schools and by the best teachers. My education has been of the most liberal character. Early impressed with the value of knowledge, I devoted myself assiduously to the acquirement of every branch taught in the school to which I was sent. My father's misfortune in business gave a direction to my thoughts, which, otherwise, they would never have taken. I felt that much might devolve upon me; that the time might come when those I loved would need my efforts. This idea fastened itself so closely upon my mind, that I never lost sight of it, and it made me studious and earnest in the acquirement of every thing I was called upon to learn. The consequence is, I am so thoroughly grounded in the various branches of female education, that I can teach them."

"Can you teach the modern languages?"

"Yes. I gave much attention to French, Italian and German, and believe that I understand the best methods by which they are taught."

"How is your musical education?"

"I had one of the best Masters in the city, and he considers me among his most finished pupils."

"And you are ready to use the ability you possess for the support of your family?"

"Ready? Yes, and willing!"

"Have you settled upon any plan yet?"

"Oh no. My mind has been too much disturbed about my husband. He is I trust, out of danger, and I am now beginning to think over the work that lies before me. His health, I am too well satisfied, is broken. Anxiety, care and labor will destroy him. My health is good. Thus far I have leaned upon him; now the order must be reversed. I am the stronger, he must lean upon me."

Mr. Markle was charmed by the beautiful enthusiasm of the young wife, and resolved to be her friend.

"Do you think yourself capable of undertaking the charge of a school?" he asked.

"What ever work my hands find to do, Mr. Markle," replied Grace, "that I am resolved to do with all my might. I will open a school, if I can procure a sufficient number of scholars; or I will give lessons in music, in drawing, or in the languages."

"What is the rent of this house?"

"We pay five hundred dollars."

"The situation is a good one for a school."

"Yes; but the rent is too high."

"That would depend on the number of scholars."

"True. But, in beginning, I could not expect many pupils."

"What would you teach?"

"I would prefer having only those who are well advanced. To such I would teach all the higher branches."

"I have two daughters," said Mr. Markle, after reflecting for some time, "and I shall esteem it a privilege to have them placed under the care of one for whom my brief intercourse has given me so profound a regard. If you could inspire them with something of your own noble spirit, the benefit conferred would be beyond all price. I am much in error, if I cannot procure you a dozen more scholars. At least I will try. Take courage madam! To one with your feelings, there is no such thing as fail. In a few days I will see you again. In the mean time let not imagined difficulties affect your mind with even a momentary despondency."

It was nearly a week before Mr. Markle called again upon Grace.

"How is your husband?" was his first kind enquiry.

"He is improving, but very slowly?"

"Has his mind gained sufficient strength to revert to his old business?"

"He is beginning to be disturbed on that account, and asks many questions, which I avoid answering as far as it is prudent to do so. This disturbance I can already see acts injuriously upon him."

While Grace was speaking, Mr. Markle drew forth his pocket book, and taking therefrom a paper, handed it to her.

"What is this?" she asked, as she opened and glanced over what was written within.

"It is an unconditional release of your husband from any and all obligations that may remain due by him after the settlement of his business. This his creditors tender him in the spirit of humanity."

Tears came into the eyes of Grace. She did not speak, but gratitude was in every line of her beautiful face.

"And further," said Mr. Markle; "the creditors have, without a dissenting voice, agreed that not an article of your household furniture shall be touched. Here"—and he handed Grace another paper, "is their transfer of all this part of your husband's property to yourself."

Grace took this paper, but she could not see a line written thereon for the tears that were ready to start forth upon her glowing cheeks.

"And still further," continued Mr. Markle, "they have desired me to present you, on their behalf, with the sum of one thousand dollars."

Mr. Markle handed Grace a check as he spoke.

The gathering tears overflowed their boundaries.

"For kindness like this," said the young wife, "I was not pre-

pared. Ah sir. If those generous-hearted men could see my heart and read its grateful emotions, they would have their reward. But God, who loves the merciful, will bless them for this good deed!"

After Grace had grown calmer, Mr. Markle said—

"And now, Mrs. Links, having settled all this, what shall we say of the future? Do you still keep to the purposes expressed at our last interview?"

"Firmly."

"And I have seen no reason for repenting of what I proposed in regard to my own children. I have talked with their mother and with them. The former, I find, knows you better than I did. She has known you for years—if not intimately, yet by reputation. She feels as I do, and says that she will esteem it a privilege indeed to have our daughters under your care. As for the girls, they are delighted with the proposed change. Moreover, both myself and wife have spoke to a good many persons about you; and we have already ten young ladies engaged for your school on the day you are ready to begin. As to prices, we have all agreed that these shall be liberal. We do not believe that it is good for our children to go to crowded seminaries, and would rather pay larger fees in order to have them in a smaller and more select school. The present location of your house we all approve, therefore, if you finally conclude to do as you proposed, let it be here."

"Will it be prudent to remain under the present high rent," asked Grace.

"Yes; for it is the purpose of those who have already consented to place their daughters under your care, to sustain the experiment for at least two years. So, give yourself no thought about rent or any thing of that kind; only manage all your affairs as prudently and as economically as possible. Let your first thoughts and your best energies be in your school; and you need not feel any anxiety about the result."

"For kindness so disinterested, Mr. Markle," said Grace, "I cannot express half the gratitude I feel; and it will be the leading purpose of my mind to repay it in every possible manner."

"You will have the labor and we the benefit," replied Mr. Markle, smiling. "The obligation is upon our side."

CHAPTER XII.

THE feeble objections urged by the husband of Grace to her plans for the future, were all overruled. To his exhausted system, strength came back slowly, until it gained a certain point, and then there was little visible progression. It was full three months from the time he came home, prostrate from over-action, ere he was able to go out again, and then a walk of only a few squares so overcame him, that he did not, for days, regain what he lost by the effort.

It was indeed a hard trial for him to see the wife he so tenderly loved, and for whom all possible sacrifices would have been light, assume the task of sustaining the family by her own exertions. But, ere long, she made him half-forget, in the cheerful and willing spirit manifested, that she was bearing the burdens he would so gladly have assumed, if strength for the task had been given.

When Grace was ready to take pupils, twelve young ladies were placed under her care, to receive instruction in certain branches of education. The price to be paid was fixed, rather by the parents than by the teacher, at one hundred and fifty dollars a year. The wish was to keep the school as select as possible. Twenty pupils was the limit agreed upon, and, in less than three months her class was full.

The task assumed by Grace was no light one; but, it is the strength of our purposes that sustains and renders us unconscious of the great burdens we sometimes bear. A willing and cheerful spirit, united to a high and vigorous purpose, made the task, though difficult in reality, seem easy to the young wife and mother. She was toiling for those she loved, and love made light the work upon which she had entered.

When Herman Links went down, after a desperate struggle to keep above the waters, the wreck of his fortune was complete. A man without sympathy for others, and hard in all his dealings with the unfortunate, now that his evil days grew nigh, none were found to care for or sympathize with him in the troubles by which he was surrounded. Without a feeling of pity, his creditors seized upon all that was available, even going into his house and appropriating to their own use the most valuable part of his furniture.

Literally stripped of every thing, and cast out from the community of Merchants among whom he had moved for years with a proud and self-sufficient dignity, the poor debtor—for he was now a deeply involved debtor, his property not paying, by a large sum, the amount of claims against him—shrunk away humbled, broken spirited and almost in despair, with his wife and daughter clinging to him as helpless and despairing as himself.

For two years before these events, there had been little intercourse between the two families of the father and son. The mother and

sister of Henry, for a time after his marriage with Grace, visited him and his lovely young wife frequently. But, becoming aware of this, Mr. Links showed a violence of anger, and indulged in such strong language, that it was deemed best, on the part of Clara and her mother, to visit Grace only at distant intervals, and then to conceal from him entirely the fact of their having done so. The breach between Henry and his father was not, therefore, healed. In fact, they had neither met nor spoken to each other for years. When his son's failure was mentioned to Mr. Links, he merely answered, in a growling voice—

"I've troubles enough of my own to bear,"

"He is very ill," was added.

"Don't talk to me about him, I pray!" angrily and impatiently replied the father.

As he would not bear the mention of Henry's name, the first shock of misfortune not having in the least softened his obdurate feelings, he was not made acquainted with the fact of his extremely dangerous condition, nor of the failure of his system to rally, after the violence of the disease from which he had suffered, was abated. Nor did he know how the form of his true-hearted wife had been interposed between him and the tempest, nor that she had so broken to him its violence, that he scarcely felt the rush of the passing storm.

No man is really so poor as he who's chief ability to make his way in the world, lies in his knowledge of the means of using money in trade—that is, when he is stripped of every thing, and embarrassed beyond the hope of extrication. Such was the condition of Herman Links. Advanced in years, penniless, and without a knowledge of any trade, art, or calling by which, in serving society, he could get even a small income in return for his labor, he found himself suddenly reduced to a simple dependence upon his own personal efforts. But, what could he do? He had shown no real friendship for any one, and now he had no friends. When Mr. Wilkins failed—Wilkins, his despised, persecuted, and almost hated debtor—there were dozens to feel an interest in him, and to step forward to place him in a comfortable position where he remained for life. But, from Mr. Links all turned away. He had, really, repulsed all, while he seemed to attract all. And when his money, the only attractive thing there had been about him, was scattered to the winds, there were none so poor as to do him honor.

A few months, from the time of Mr. Links' failure, sufficed to bring the extremity he had so dreaded from the first moment of his fall, when his heart shrunk with an instinctive sense of weakness. With a hundred or two dollars in his pocket—all he possessed in the world—Mr. Links had gathered together the poor remnant of furniture left after the creditors had taken all they thought worth having, and hid himself away with his wife and daughter in a small house far in the suburbs of the city. Occasionally, his restless spirit and anxiety for the future, would drive him forth, and he would find his way to some of the old familiar places; and even approach some

former business acquaintance with a humble application for interest in procuring employment. Coldness to him was the same as repulse, and drove him back again to his obscure abode—and all such applications were coldly received. No one pitied him—no one felt an interest in him. Desperate at length grew his circumstances. His money was all expended, and yet he could get nothing to do. The near approach of want strips man of his false pride and self-consequence. Gladly would Mr. Links have accepted of any employment, even the most humble and laborious, in order to procure things necessary for his family. The health of his wife had suffered much of late, and was now so poor that exertion on her part was next to impossible; and, as for Clara, what could she do? What ability had she to serve others in useful work and thus earn even a pittance?

So entire was the separation between the two families, that, since the disasters by which they were prostrated, the one knew nothing of the condition of the other! The health of Henry continued so feeble, and his spirits so poor in consequence, that he took no interest in any thing beyond his own little circle; and he did not happen to meet with any one who knew how extreme were the circumstances of his father's family. As for Grace, her new duties were so arduous and absorbing, as to require the concentration of all her thoughts. One day a lady, whose daughter was in her school, said to Grace—

"I heard something to-day that pained me very much."

Grace looked at her enquiringly, and she continued.

"I am told that your husband's father is in the utmost extremity. That, in fact, his family are in want of the common necessities of life. Can this be really so?"

"I am as ignorant in regard to them as yourself," replied Grace.

"But, surely, there must be some mistake!"

"My informant was positive about the matter."

"Do you know where they are?"

"I do not. But I can learn."

"Can you do so immediately?"

"Yes."

"I will send to your house as early as you think you can get information," said Grace, her manner evincing much concern.

"You may send in an hour" returned the lady.

Intelligence so painful deeply distressed the mind of Grace. Her first thought was to mention the subject to her husband; but, on reflection, she deemed it best not to disturb his mind, too ready to feel excitement and to suffer therefrom.

But, how was she to afford the help so much needed? If she approached the father of her husband, who, in all his better days had rejected her with anger—would not his pride reject her still? Long and earnestly did she dwell upon the matter. Oh, how gladly would she now effect, if possible, a reconciliation! How gladly would she receive them all into her own household, and provide for them, by her own labor, every comfort they needed.

On that very day, Mr. Links had gone to an old merchant with

whom he had done business for years, and almost begged him for some kind of employment.

"I am in great extremity," said he. "Will you not interest yourself for me?"

The Merchant shook his head coldly. The application disturbed him, and he wished to get rid of one in whom he now felt no interest.

"I can't get you anything to do," said he.

"I will except even the humblest situation," urged Mr. Links, "and the most moderate compensation."

Another gentleman came in at the moment, and the merchant turned, indifferently from Mr. Links, and entered into conversation with the new comer. The unhappy man stood for a few moments, and then moved away slowly and left the store.

There had come a point of extremity. Since the little money possessed by the family, when they moved to their humbler abode, had been exhausted, one little article after another of personal ornament had been sold, and the things useful that could be spared, parted with, until every resource was gone, and yet Mr. Links could succeed in getting no employment. It was at this point of extremity that he made the appeal to an old business friend, and was so coldly repulsed. It had cost him much sacrifice of feeling to make this application; but, he had felt sure that it would result in good. How bitterly was he disappointed!

Never had Mr. Links felt so unhappy; never so discouraged; never so broken in spirits as when he returned home. The prospect before him was appalling. Was he and his family to come to the extremity of wanting food? He shuddered as the involuntary question arose in his mind!

"Here is a letter for you?" said his daughter when he came home.

"A letter!" He took it eagerly, while a feeble hope went glancing through his mind; but he did not open it, until he was alone.—On breaking the seal he found it to contain five ten dollar bills, and these few words—

"Accept this little offering from a real friend, who, but an hour ago, learned that you were in need."

The hand-writing was that of a lady.

Years had passed since a feeling of thankfulness to heaven stirred in the heart of Herman Links; but, now, this timely aid seemed so like a heaven-sent boon, that, spontaneously, an emotion of acknowledgment and gratitude was born therein, and his eyes glanced timidly upwards.

"Who can this real friend be?" said he, after a thoughtful pause of some moments. "The note is in the hand-writing of a lady."

But he did not think in the right direction. The letter was shown to his wife and to Clara, but neither of them rightly conjectured from whom it had come.

A few days after this occurrence, Mr. Links happened to be in a public house, when he overheard the following conversation between two gentlemen, who little dreamed how deeply interested was the

seemingly unconscious person who sat near them, with his face hidden from view by the newspaper he appeared to be reading.

"How is Henry Links getting?" asked one of these individuals.

"He remains very feeble," replied the other.

"It is doubtful if he ever has any health again?" said the first speaker.

"Very doubtful."

"Had he any thing to fall back upon at the time of his failure?"

"Oh yes."

"His father, I suppose?"

"Oh, dear no! His father was all knocked to pieces."

"He failed, I know. But, men like him generally take good care not to sink everything."

"I thought he would have taken care of number one when the pinch came; but, I believe the creditors were too sharp for him. They stripped him of every dollar."

"What, then, is Henry's dependence? What did he fall back upon?"

"His wife."

"His wife! Had she property! Why, I thought she was poor. Wasn't she the daughter of Manly Wilkins?"

"Yes."

"He had nothing to leave her."

"No."

"Had she rich relatives?"

"No. She was rich herself."

"You talk in riddles. Where did her riches come from?"

"Have you not heard about her?"

"No."

"Her case is an interesting one. In fact, it is a piece of romance in real life. Are you aware, that old Mr. Links has never spoken to her?"

"I believe I did hear, at the time of the marriage, that the old man was terribly angry about it; but I thought it was only a little flare up on his part and all over long ago."

"Far from it. A complete estrangement was wrought between him and Henry."

"And has no reconciliation taken place?"

"None. The old man remained as hard as iron. The fact is, he had a grudge against Mr. Wilkins, which could not be forgiven; and moreover, wanted Henry to marry into the Carson family."

"For money?"

"Of course."

"He didn't want him to marry that oldest daughter of Carson's surely!"

"Yes."

"Why, she's the ugliest little witch in the city; and, as ill-tempered as she is repulsive in person. I'm told that she led Barker, who married her in the end, a most uncomfortable life; and that now,

since misfortunes have come upon them, she makes all around her wretched by her complaints. Poor Barker !”

“If Henry Links had married her, he would now be in his grave,” said the one who appeared to be most familiar with the affairs of Mr. Links and his family.

“Why so?”

“His wife has borne him up, and thought and acted for him in the trials incident to his failure in business, as tenderly, carefully, and wisely, as if she were a mother protecting and caring for a helpless infant.”

“Indeed !” said the other, in a voice that showed the interest that was awakening in his mind.

“But, the whole history of this noble-minded young woman, is a most touching and instructive one. Do you remember when her father failed in business?”

“Very well.”

“I was one of the creditors, and among those who felt friendly towards him. But, there was a small party of claimants who marred every thing by their rapacity ; who would have nothing less than the pound of flesh. The head and mouth-piece of this party was Herman Links. He would hear to no arrangement that had in it a spark of humanity. He claimed his bond, and would have nothing less.—The way in which he insulted and trampled on the feelings of Mr. Wilkins was shocking.”

“Wilkins was in every sense of the word a better man than he ever was or will be—”

Interrupted the other, with considerable indignation.

“No one who knows them both will gainsay your remark. Well ; through the influence of Mr. Links, all the debtor’s effects were taken out of his hands, and the business settled up by an assignee, who lined his own pockets handsomely, and divided some sixty or seventy cents in the dollar for us. I believed then, and I believe now, that if we had permitted Mr. Wilkins to close up the business, he would have paid us every farthing of our claims, and had a little surplus over with which to begin the world anew. As it was, we lost pretty seriously, and he was left with a debt of over forty thousand dollars upon his shoulders.”

“Thus it is, that a selfish, ill-natured policy results in loss rather than benefit,” remarked the friend.

“Yes. It is usually so. Well, seeing how things were likely to turn out, some of us, who felt an interest in Mr. Wilkins, set on foot a movement to procure him a release ; and, but for Links, would have been successful. He boldly declared that he never would sign a release for any man ; that it was nothing more than a premium on insolvency. So, he placed his foot on the neck of his fallen debtor and held him to the earth.”

“Could any thing be more heartless than such a spirit.”

“Nothing. It was not only heartless and malignant so far as the poor debtor was concerned, but suicidal in relation to himself. If a

release could have been obtained for Wilkins, he would have gone into business with Everhart, who was then looking out for a connection with some man who had a thorough knowledge of trade."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. Everhart was desirous of forming a connection with Wilkins, but while a debt of forty thousand dollars hung over him, such an arrangement was out of the question."

"Of course. And still Links refused to sign off."

"Yes. I believe he thought that all the others would do so, and that Wilkins, in his desire to form so advantageous a connection, would arrange to buy him off."

"How much was due to Links?"

"Not over four thousand dollars."

"Why didn't Wilkins arrange this?"

"I don't know. I believe his mind revolted at the idea of paying the oppressor, while the generous-minded received nothing. At any rate, Mr. Links stood in the way of a connection with Everhart, and so it was not formed."

"The house of Everhart and Grey is now one of the soundest in our city."

"Yes; and it has made a good deal of money. Well, to continue my story. Links, I presume, saw that he had overreached himself and injured Wilkins into the bargain, and so he felt still more angry towards his debtor. It was a little kind of a business for one in his condition, to stoop to a continued quarrel with a prostrate debtor. But he did so stoop. Wilkins, you remember, was, soon after, chosen to fill old Mr. Archer's place as President of the — Marine Insurance Company, at a comfortable salary of two thousand dollars a year. Every one, I believe, but Links, was glad of this; but, the fact distilled another drop of wormwood in his bitter heart. He could not feel happy, while the man who owed him a dollar enjoyed a grain of earthly comfort. As to what were his first duties in life, Mr. Wilkins had his own views; and he was just the man to act up to what he believed to be right. He had intelligence, capacity, and industry sufficient, if left free, to procure for his family a liberal income; and he understood well the power that was in him. But his creditors, instead of relieving him from the weight of a debt that he had no strength to throw off while prostrate, kept him down by the pressure of a hopeless obligation. Under these circumstances, he believed that his family was entitled to all he could earn, and he gave them every external good in his power to obtain. To this end, he sent his children to the best schools; for, he well understood the value of a good education. 'I shall have no money to leave them,' said he, 'but in the place thereof, I will give them the very best education they are capable of receiving; and,' he made the measure of their capacity the measure of expense."

"And he was right," said the friend.

"He was, undoubtedly," returned the other.

"But Mr. Links, I suppose, objected."

"Of course. Finding that Grace, the oldest daughter of Mr. Wilkins, was continued at the same expensive school where he was sending his own daughter Clara, he took occasion to read Mr. Wilkins an insulting lecture on the subject, and to charge him with educating his children at his expense."

"Outrageous!"

"Yes; it *was* outrageous. When I heard of it my very blood, as they say, did boil. But, Mr. Wilkins was not to be moved from his purpose by this. Grace was continued at the school."

"And I suppose Links, in indignation, took Clara away?"

"Soon after this, Mr. Links heard that Grace and Clara sat together at school, and were friends. Upon this, he wrote the Principal of the school a note, desiring that they might be separated."

"Oh no."

"It is true. And so they were separated, much, I have been told, to the injury of Clara. Then he happened to meet the two girls, arm in arm, in the street one day, coming home from school. This so fretted his mind, that he determined to remove Clara and send her away from the city to a boarding school."

"In order to keep her from a degrading association with a debtor's daughter?"

"Yes; although I have been informed by Mr. ———, the principal of the school, that while Grace and Clara were seated together, the latter came so much under the power and better influence, exercised by the former, that she scarcely seemed like the same girl. She no longer neglected her lessons as before, was orderly, and gave him but little trouble. But, when he removed her, at her father's request, from the side of Grace, she fell back into her old habits of inattention, and was ever doing something not consistent with order. At times, when he reproved her, she would say—'Let me go back again to my old seat beside Grace Wilkins. She helped me to study, and filled me with an ambition to do right.' That, however, was not permitted. Still, while she remained at Mr. ———'s school, Grace exercised a certain good influence over her. They were warmly attached friends, and close companions the moment school was dismissed or when hours of recess gave them an opportunity to be together. But, when Mr. Links removed his daughter to a boarding school, he put out the light which fell upon her path and showed her the way in which to walk. Ah! That was one of the greatest mistakes Mr. Links ever committed. He sowed, then, the mind; and in harvest-time, reaped the whirlwind. You know something about Clara's unhappy marriage?"

"Yes. She run away with that fellow Paulette, who was taken up for forgery in less than a week after their marriage."

"But for the father's—what shall I call it—insanity?—Yes!—but for her father's insanity, produced by his wrong feelings towards Mr. Wilkins, this great evil might never have taken place. On his own head rests the sin of destroying his child's happiness for life

Ah! What sad consequences, often result from our errors. It appears, sometimes as if the re-action upon wrong would never cease."

"It will never cease, in this case, while life throbs in the veins of his unhappy child."

"I fear not. Grace Wilkins remained in the school of Mr.——, until her education was completed; that is, until she had mastered all the various branches of learning taught in the school. When she appeared in society, she was one of the loveliest, best educated, and most accomplished young woman in the city. Take her all in all, and I do not think she had her equal. When a little girl, she had been the favorite of Henry Links: and now, on meeting her a most brilliant and beautiful young lady, he was captivated by her charms. But, his father wished him to marry that daughter of Carson's. Wished him to embrace an object for which he could only feel dislike, instead of one that was beauty and excellence itself. And when Henry, following his own better sense and feelings, wedded Grace, his father turned from him in anger, and, to this day, there has been no reconciliation.

"And now for the sequel to the whole matter. Time proves all things, and it has proved this. The education which Mr. Wilkins gave to his daughter, in spite of the insults and opposition of Mr. Links—that education has proved to the son of the oppressing creditor the means of support when both fortune and health were utterly gone. In the last struggle of Henry with the difficulties by which he, in common with hundreds of others, were surrounded, he taxed his weak system too far. When the crisis at last came, and he had no longer the power to bear up against the pressure that was on him, he felt completely exhausted in body and mind. It was then that the innate strength of character and treasured resources of the lovely being who had moved along, like a shadow, by his side, came instantly into manifest existence. When he became weak, then was she strong. At once she interposed herself between him and the world, and would not permit even a sigh from the tempest of trouble that was raging without, to reach his ears. She met, herself, the creditors, or rather a committee appointed by them, and, acting under the advice of her husband's attorney, arranged all things regarding the settlement of affairs according to the best judgment she could bring to bear upon questions so foreign to those she had usually been called upon to decide. The estate proved insolvent; but so charmed with and interested in her were the gentlemen whose business it had been to confer with her, that their influence with the other creditors procured a full release for her husband from all remaining liabilities; to which was added a present to her of all their household goods, and a thousand dollars in cash."

"Charming! Delightful! It does one's heart good to hear a story like this. I feel as if there yet remained some virtue in the world," said the friend with animation.

"Satisfied" continued the other, "that her husband's health was almost a total wreck, and that, henceforth, his very life would, de-

pend on a perfect freedom from labor and excitement, she turned her thoughts upon the means of sustaining all by her own exertions.— And now it was that the liberal education, so wisely bestowed by her father, proved the means by which she accomplished the work she earnestly desired to perform. You know Mr. Markle?"

"Yes."

"He was one of those who had been charmed by the brave spirit she manifested in her severe trials. To him she explained her wish to use the abilities she possessed in the support of her helpless family—her husband was then as helpless as her children. She explained to him how thoroughly she had been educated, and expressed full confidence in her own ability to teach, Markle at once interested himself for her, and now, she has a select school of young ladies, numbering twenty, the limit agreed upon by those who send their children, and from each pupil she receives one hundred and fifty dollars a year."

"Three thousand dollars."

"Yes. And her expense for rent, an assistant teacher, and the incidentals of her school, do not exceed one thousand dollars. I send my oldest daughter, and would pay twice the tuition fee, rather than not have her under the care and influence of such a woman as Mrs. Links."

"But, I have an engagement for this hour," added the speaker, looking at his watch. "And shall be late."

Both gentlemen arose, without observing the presence of old Mr. Links, and left from the room.

CHAPTER XIII.

For some time after the men retired, Mr. Links remained seated, with the newspaper held before his face, as when they were conversing. Every word to which they had given utterance, came to his ears distinctly. He was surprised, rebuked, and half stupified.— Could all be true that he had heard? Was he not dreaming?

At length he arose, and leaving the house, moved slowly along the street with his eyes upon the pavement. His mind was strangely bewildered; yet it was full of what he had just heard. Was Grace indeed so lovely; so excellent?—Grace, whom he had spurned as unworthy an alliance with his family? Well did he know the man who had related so accurately the story of his wrong doings. He was a merchant of standing, with whose family, in his best days, he would have felt it no discredit for his own to mingle in intimate association. His opinion of Grace was not to be lightly weighed. Yet, it was not so much what he had said about her, as what he had related of her in connexion with his son's failure and illness, that most affected him. Here was the test of her character. This proved her

worth. He knew something of the effect produced on Mr. Carson's daughter,—she whom he had wished his son to marry—by the misfortunes of her husband and father. How different the effect on Grace! How strongly in contrast were their characters presented! And she it was whom he had hated as a child—hated without cause—and wronged as a woman! Like the blind man, whose eyes were opened, he at first saw objects confusedly, as trees walking. He was as one awaking from a dream, all the circumstances of which were reversed by the real-life around him.

Slowly he passed along, musing upon what he had heard. Already he was beginning to feel very differently towards Grace from what he had felt for years. In spite of his involuntary effort to stifle the sentiment, respect was already forming itself in his mind. She was superior to the majority around her, and he could not help the admission. At the same time, an emotion of shame for the part he had been playing stirred in his bosom, and he clenched his hands and drew his lips tightly together with the pain it occasioned.

"No—no! That cannot be!" he murmured at length, pausing suddenly, and partly turning his body as if by the act to turn from the thought presented. His mind had reverted to the money received from some unknown friend, and the suggestion that Grace was this friend came with the thought.

"No—no! That cannot be!" he repeated. And yet, the idea once presented, he could not push it aside. The longer he dwelt upon it, the more likely to be the true one it seemed. Oh! what an oppressing sense of humiliation came gradually upon the heart of the unhappy old man.

On returning home, he said nothing to his wife or daughters of what he had heard. He could not speak of that to them, with all the past lifting its hands rebukingly against him.

Now, for the first time since he heard of Henry's illness and shattered health, did his heart begin to go out towards his son—his son for whom he had once anticipated so much. Yet, if he had been permitted to do by him as he had wished, how poor would have been his performance to what he had done for himself. Vividly was this presented to his mind. Grace, if all he had heard was true, could be little less than an angel compared with the one he would have chosen for his son's companion.

Next came the wish to see Henry again and be reconciled to him. To bury the past with its errors and animosities. But, pride arose instantly in opposition. If what he had heard were all true, Grace, by her own efforts was procuring a handsome income, while he was in the extreme of poverty. If their cases had been reversed, and he had acted from such feelings as were now in his heart, he would have gone to his son immediately and sought for a reconciliation. But he could not do that now,—Oh no! He could suffer death, but not humiliation like this.

The more Mr. Links thought about the timely aid received, the stronger became his conviction that Grace was their angel of mercy.

One day, a week later, on coming home from a fruitless effort to obtain some employment, his wife said to him—

“That unknown friend has remembered us again. Who can she be?”

“Again?”

“Yes. Half an hour ago a man came with all the things you see on the floor there—provision enough for a month, besides some little presents for me and Clara. He would answer no questions, but said this note would explain where they were from.”

Mr. Links took the note from the hand of his wife and read—

“Accept these few things from one who feels deeply your sad change of fortune, and who, were it in her power, would gladly restore every blessing that has been lost. Though all is dark around you, do not be faint-hearted. The All-seeing One looks through the blackest night of human trouble. Turn your eyes upward, and you will see at least one star in the cloudy sky. May *He* whose boundless compassion is ever going forth towards the children of men, make lighter the heavy burdens under which you are now toiling onward in your journey through life.”

This note was in the hand writing of the one received before. For some time after reading it, Mr. Links remained like a person half stupified.

“Who can it be from?” said Mrs. Links.

Her husband looked at her, but made no answer.

“I’m sure I have seen that writing before,” said Clara. “Who’s can it be?”

Still Mr. Links made no remark; but, from his manner, it was plain that he was a good deal affected. At length he handed the note back to his wife, and, rising up, went from the room without the utterance of a word. Retiring into a chamber, he sat down, and covering his face with his hands, commenced rocking his body backwards and forwards with a quick, restless motion. How was the proud man humbled to the earth; the strong man bent and agitated!

That Grace was the angel by whose hands heaven had sent relief in their great extremity, Mr. Links no longer had a doubt. And with this forced conviction, came a feeling of painful reluctance to receive any thing from one he had so wronged, outraged and insulted.

“Oh that I had some employment!” he at length murmured, lifting his head and looking up with a countenance full of anguish. “Oh that I could find work, were it ever so hard and ever so humble. To be brought to this! Lord help me!”

Day after day, Mr. Links continued to go out and to seek for something to do. But every one seemed to turn against him. All he met were busy, yet for him there was no work to spare.

“The watchman on our ward was killed last night,” said a man to him, who knew something of his extremity; “perhaps you might get the place he has left vacant. The pay is thirty dollars a month. I know the Mayor and Captain of the Night Police very well, and I will speak a good word for you.”

This suggestion was made about a week after the last favor received from their unknown friend.

"I will think about it," replied Mr. Links, turning off quickly, to conceal the effect made upon him by the proposition.

"You must think in a hurry," said the man. "There will be fifty applicants for the vacant place before night. If you desire it, I will see the Mayor for you in the course of an hour or two."

A city watchman! The knees of the poor old man smote together at the thought.

"Thank you for your kindness! I'll call round again in a little while and talk about the matter with you."

A city watchman! And had it come to that! Could Mr. Links, but a little while before one of the Merchant princes of the town, find no other means of earning his bread?

Hurriedly did the unhappy man, with a feeling of despair in his heart, turn his steps homeward. As he entered his poor abode, he found, to his surprise, a young lady, whose face had in it some familiar features, sitting alone in the little parlor. She arose as he entered, while a slight flush mantled her face, advanced a step or two, and then paused with her eyes fixed earnestly upon him. Mr. Links bowed slightly, and seemed embarrassed.

"You do not know me," said the lady, in a sweet, penetrating voice, partly offering her hand as she spoke.

Mr. Links took her hand. As he did so, her's was compressed tightly. He shook his head in a doubtful manner.

"We have long been strangers, *father*! Let us now be friends."

It was Grace! Her voice was now unsteady, her lips quivered, and tears sprung to her eyes: but a loving and tender smile was on her beautiful countenance. To him, her face was radiant as the face of an angel.

"Let us be friends, *father*," she repeated, as she still held his hand in a tightening grasp.

The old man's eyes dropped to the floor. He did not speak; nor did he attempt to withdraw the hand to which Grace was clinging.

"Let us be friends! Let us forget and forgive the past, *father*! *Dear Father!*" repeated Grace earnestly.

She leaned towards him and looked into his face, with a most tender expression.

"Dear father—"

But, the work was done. The spirit-broken old man had in him no power to resist an appeal like this. Bending down his face, with the purpose of concealing, in part, the emotions that were overmastering him, he let it rest upon the shoulder of Grace, who, instantly, threw her arm about his neck, laid her own face against his, and sobbed aloud. The frame of the old man quivered to its centre.

"God bless you!" he murmured in a broken voice. "I have not deserved this."

"And all is reconciled?" said Grace, looking up in a few moments, her whole countenance beaming with joy.

At that instant the wife and daughter entered the room. They had purposely left it when they saw him approach the house, thinking it best that Grace should meet him alone.

"If you can ever forgive me," trembled from the tongue of Mr. Links.

"Dear mother! All is reconciled," said Grace, turning to Mrs. Links, and speaking with animation. "How much of happiness is yet in store for us!"

"And now, dear father, mother, and sister!" said Grace, after all had grown calm. "You must come home with us. For years we have been separated; now let us make a single household."

"Oh no! That cannot be!" quickly replied Mr. Links.

"Why not?" asked Grace.

"Oh, no! Oh, no!" This was repeated in an earnest voice. "Never will I consent to become a burden on you. Go on, in the way you have begun with so brave a spirit, and sustain those who have a natural right to look up to you in their weakness and extremity. But, no such claims have we."

"Mother," said Grace, turning to Mrs. Links, and speaking with the eloquence of true feeling. "The health of your son is completely broken. He needs your tender care almost as much as when he was a child. As for me, the duties of a school take nearly all my time and attention. My husband and children are neglected, and deprived of many comforts. Will you not come, for their sakes, and help me? And will not Clara come also? I want her; I must have her. I seek now to confer no favors, but to ask them."

Grace paused in her earnest speech. Mrs. Links looked first at her husband, and then at the wife of her son. Her own heart was leaping in response to the invitation.

"Yes, you will come! I know you will come!" said Grace. "If not for my sake, for the sake of Henry."

"Don't talk so child! Don't! You know we can't do what you ask," interposed Mr. Links. "It's impossible!"

"Impossible?"

"Yes Grace. Impossible! Shall it be said that I ——"

Mr. Links checked himself.

"Let other's say what they will," quickly answered Grace. "But let us do what we know to be right. Now, I am sure you can find no wrong in what I propose. Come, then, with us,—Come over and help us. We need your maturer strength and wiser counsel. Come! If you love your child, come!"

"Dear child! you must not talk in this way," said Mr. Links.—
"We cannot promise to do what you ask."

"But, you will come and see us?"

"Oh yes."

"When?"

"Right soon."

"To day?"

There was a moment's pause.

"Yes, to-day," replied Mr. Links.

"And Clara; may she not go back with me now?"

"If she will."

The eyes of Grace and Clara met. There was a light of affection in both.

"Come, dear," said Grace. "Get yourself ready right speedily. I have already overstaid my time, and must hurry home again. How glad Henry will be to see you again."

Clara was soon prepared to accompany Grace.

"And now," said the latter, as they were about leaving—"I shall expect to see you at number three hundred, ——— street, this evening. Clara won't return home until you come for her. We shall look for you early to tea. Don't keep us waiting."

"Heaven bless the dear child!" exclaimed Mrs. Links, as the door closed upon Grace and Clara.

"Amen!" fell in fervent accents from the tongue of Mr. Links.

"She has broken my hard heart all to pieces," said the old man, in an unsteady voice. "I feel weak and humble before her."

"Poor Henry!" sighed Mrs. Links. "Grace says that he is a complete wreck. Oh! how she cried when she told me all about him. How utterly prostrate he was, for a period, in body and mind. We must see him to-day."

Mr. Links did not reply. His pride was holding him back; but his heart was drawing him in the way he should go with an almost irresistible power; and, in the end pride was forced to yield.

On that evening a joyful re-union of the long separated families took place, and, in coming together, there was such a spontaneous flowing into each other, that they ever-after remained as one family. As the evening began to wane, Mr. Links proposed to his wife and Clara that they should return home.

"Come up stairs first," said Grace, smiling. "I have something to show you. We will be back in a little while," she added, speaking to her husband. "You and Clara can entertain each other until our return."

Grace then ascended to the third story with Mr. and Mrs. Links, and took them into the front chamber, which was handsomely furnished in every particular.

"This is your room," said she with a sweet and winning smile. "See mother, here are your night clothes on the bed. I sent for them. And there, father, is your dressing case. To-morrow, whatever else you want, can be brought over. The back chamber is for Clara. Now, not one word of opposition! We have got you here, and don't mean to let you go. You are our prisoners. Good night!"

And turning quickly, as she kissed her hand to them, she glided from the room and closed the door behind her.

If the prisoners of Grace meditated an escape, they did not attempt to execute the design. The fair jailor found them all safe on the next morning.

CHAPTER XIV.

WHEN the family met at the breakfast table on the next day, Mr. Links looked sober. The fact was, he had not slept much through the night. How could a man like him, suddenly placed in such peculiar circumstances, sleep?

It was an hour after Grace left them, before he could compose his mind sufficiently to retire to bed. At first, he declared that nothing would induce him to remain. But his wife had many arguments and persuasions to offer, the weight of which subdued, at length, his opposition, if it did not overcome his objections.

The quick perceptions of Grace, made her fully comprehend the state of Mr. Links' mind. She was by no means certain that the family would remain with her; but, she resolved that all a woman's tact should be used in the effort to compass that end.

After the first greeting, as they all met at the breakfast table, Grace perceived a shadow begin to settle on the faces of Mr. and Mrs. Links.

"I hope you were comfortable through the night," said the excellent young woman, smiling in her sweet way.

"Oh; very comfortable," replied the mother of Henry.

"I'm afraid you don't relish that steak father. It's very badly cooked."

"Don't speak of it," said Mr. Links, lifting his eyes suddenly to those of Grace.

"I never was much of a house keeper," added Grace. "And now I get on worse than ever; for nearly all my attention is turned towards the school. Many things are getting to be sadly neglected."

Henry lifted his eyes to the face of his wife, and looked at her steadily for a moment. There was something like a tone of complaint or despondency in her voice, so new, that it surprised him. He was about making a remark, when a meaning glance cautioned him to remain silent.

"But," added the young wife, in a more cheerful tone. "As the day is, so shall the strength be; or, I will say, help be. Henry has often told me of mother's excellent housekeeping, and in resigning this department into her hands, now; I shall not only get relief myself, but secure the better comfort of the whole family—especially of my husband and children."

Henry Links, who felt that Grace was underrating herself in the eyes of his parents, was about controverting her declaration touching her poor housekeeping, which, she perceiving, checked him by a look that he understood.

The father, who had raised his head, for the purpose of telling Grace that they had no intention of remaining in her house; affected

as much by the tone in which the last sentence was uttered, as by the words themselves, bent down again and resumed his meal.

Grace understood precisely the effect of what she had said.

"And then Clara can help me so much in the school!" she added. "We've talked that all over."

"And what am I to do?" said the elder Mr. Links, looking towards Grace with a half amused, half serious air.

"Oh!" she replied with animation. "We'll find something for you to do also, as soon as we get Mother and Clara fairly at work."

Mr. Links had it on his tongue to say that Grace must not think of what she proposed; but, he checked himself.

After breakfast, the old people retired to the parlors. As soon as they were alone Mr. Links said—

"It's no use for Grace to talk as she does. We can't remain here."

"I think that it is our duty to remain," replied Mrs. Links promptly.

"You didn't say that last night."

"No. But I say it now, and say it understandingly. Grace has far too much upon her, and will sink under her burdens if she be not relieved of some of them."

"God bless her!" Came almost spontaneously from the lips of the old man; for he was touched with a sudden sense of her goodness and self devotion.

"Henry is able to do nothing," resumed Mrs. Links. "Oh! He is a complete wreck; and, as Grace said to me, yesterday, needs the tenderest care. I cannot leave him, Herman!"

The mother's voice quivered, and its tones thrilled through the heart of Mr. Links, awakening echos that had slept for years.

"Stay then," he replied, with visible emotion. "Stay and give all the aid you can. But, I can be of no use. Let me return to our own house."

"No—no. That must not be thought of for a moment."

"But how can I stay, Margaret!"

"What is there to hinder?"

"Good Heavens! Can you ask? Look back, and answer the question for yourself."

"Let us forget the past."

"I cannot. It is before me, waking and sleeping; while its rebuking voice cries into my ears."

Just then their son came into the room.

"You will remain with us, father," said he, affectionately, "How happy the thought makes me. I have not felt so light of heart for years."

"It would not be right for us to burden Grace. She has weight enough to bear as it is," said Mr. Links.

"Your presence will make all lighter for her. No—no. You must not leave us now. She will never hear to such a thing."

Mr. Links shook his head.

"Why will you not stay, father?" asked Henry, with a more serious manner.

"I have not yet given up all my independence," replied Mr. Links. "If I had employment, and were thus able to contribute to the support of the family, I might not so strongly object. But, I can never consent to subsist upon the unaided efforts of one who should rather be borne up herself than be compelled to sustain others. I have some pride not yet crushed out by the iron heel of misfortune."

Henry was silent. He sympathized with his father in the mental struggle through which he was passing.

"Is it only pride that hinders?" said Henry with a smile, after some moments had passed.

"Every thing hinders!" replied Mr. Links, speaking earnestly.

"Don't say that, father. We think that nothing really hinders," returned Henry, in a gentle, almost pleading voice. "And while no real impediments are in the way, a hundred considerations exist in favor of your remaining with us. I am helpless, for the present, and Grace is heavily burdened. Too heavily, I fear, for the strength she has. Mother and Clara will be every thing to us."

"Let them remain," said the father. "I am willing; for they can be of some use."

"And let you go away!"

The young man spoke in a voice of unfeigned surprise.

"Yes."

"Never! Not for a moment will any one in this house consent to such a thing. No—If one remains, all remain."

Mr. Links, without answering, arose and commenced walking the floor with hasty steps.

For a few moments all were silent. Then Henry said—

"I will ask one thing."

"What is that?" enquired his father.

"Will you stay with us for two or three days?"

There was no answer for some moments.

"You will not deny us that little pleasure, I am sure," urged Henry.

"Say yes, Herman—Say yes!" spoke up Mrs. Links.

"Let it be so, then," replied the old man, in a half broken voice, as he resumed his seat with the air of one who had been subdued into submission by the force of a superior power. "We will stay a few days. It can do no harm in any way."

"Harm? It will do good! It will do you good, and it will do us good," said Henry, with feeling. "Your being here has done me good already."

"You will stay with us, mother," said Grace, as Mrs. Links came into the room, a little while after, where she was making some hurried preparations for school.

"Father has consented for a few days," replied Mrs. Links.

"Has he! Oh, I am so glad. If we get you that long, we will keep you altogether."

"I don't know child."

"Why won't father consent to stay?"

"He has too much independence of feeling to think for a moment of burdening you."

"Why will he talk so?" said Grace. "It will not burden, but relieve me. You see how it is. Much is neglected while I am absent from my family, the best part of my time in school. Oh! you don't know what a relief it would be for me to have you here. Does he not comprehend this?"

"Oh yes."

"Then why does he object?"

"He is willing that Clara and I shall remain."

"And he go away?"

"Yes."

"Never!"

Replied Grace, shaking her head—"Never!"

"No, we will not think of that. We must all remain, or all return to our own home."

"Can we offer no inducement?" asked Grace

"I know of none."

"Would father not remain under any circumstances?"

"Oh yes."

"What are they?"

"If he had employment, by which he could earn a few hundred dollars a year, and thus contribute, his part, to the support of the family, he would, no doubt, consent to remain here."

"Well, mother; we will hope for the best. We know not what a day may bring forth."

"Yes dear, we will hope for the best. There is One above who knows what is most for our good. In His hands we are, and we will trust in Him."

By this time, the hand on the clock pointed to within a few minutes of nine.

"I must leave you, now," said Grace, affectionately kissing her mother as she spoke. "You will find plenty to do until I am released from school at noon. There is one thing" and the voice of Grace fell, and her face became serious, "that I wish you would find out for me, if you can. I am afraid, sometimes, that nurse isn't as kind as she ought to be to Willy. The dear little fellow springs into my arms so eagerly whenever I go into the nursery, and cries so when I leave him, that I am afraid something is wrong. You'll look in upon the children, now and then, wont you?"

"Indeed will I, Grace. And, if there is any thing wrong, you may be sure that I'll find it out. Let your mind be perfectly easy about the children. I'll keep Grace with me, and make it my business to see that nothing wrong occurs with Willy."

"I shall feel so relieved!" said Grace, as she turned away, and went quickly from the chamber to resume her duties in school.

Half an hour afterwards, as Mrs. Links was passing near the nur-

sery door, with little Grace by her side, she heard Willy, who was about two years old, screaming violently, and at the same time, distinguished the voice of the nurse, who seemed excited.

"Hush, I say! If you don't hush, I'll shake the life out of you!"

Mrs. Links opened the door, silently, but quickly. Clinched tightly in the nurses hands, and forced down upon her lap, was the screaming and struggling child.

"Will you hush now!" said the nurse, angrily, not yet observing the presence of Mrs. Links.

The child still screamed and struggled.

The hand of the nurse was then uplifted to strike, but, ere the blow was given, her arm was caught by Mrs. Links.

The nurse was, of course, in great surprise, and, for some moments, did not exactly know whether she should yield to anger or alarm.

"Give me that child," said Mrs. Links, in a voice so firm and authoritative, that the nurse did not attempt resistance as the grandmother lifted Willy from her arms. The child's cries ceased instantly, and he nestled down upon the bosom to which he was now clasped tightly.

"Go and tell your aunt Clara, dear, that I want her," said Mrs. Links to Grace.

The little girl ran off for her aunt.

Recovering herself a little, the nurse now made a slight effort towards asserting her own rights against the intrusions of a stranger.

"I'd like to know, ma'am," she began, with some firmness and indignation, "what right you have to interfere in this family?"

"Silence!" retorted Mrs. Links, in a voice so authoritative, that the girl seemed, for a moment, frightened.

"I'll leave the house," said she, in a whimpering voice, "if I'm to be interfered with in this way by any and every body."

"The quicker you go the better," returned Mrs. Links, fixing her eyes upon the nurse with a look so stern and indignant, that the other quailed beneath them.

Clara came in at this juncture.

"I have just detected this girl," said Mrs. Links, "in conduct towards dear little Willy, so improper, that I cannot trust her with him a moment longer. You will take charge of him until Grace is through with her morning duties, in school."

"Indeed I will mother!" returned Clara, taking the child in her arms, and casting, at the same time, an indignant glance towards the nurse, who now, somewhat humbled, attempted to explain and excuse herself.

"Reserve all that for Mrs. Links," said Clara, impatiently. "Unkind to dear little Willy! It is too bad!" And she drew the now happy child tightly to her bosom.

Finding that the odds were altogether against her, the nurse retired, muttering to herself as she left the room.

A little while afterwards Mrs. Links joined her husband, who still remained in the parlor below.

"Just to think of it!" she exclaimed, evincing more excitement than she really felt. "I caught that wretch of a nurse about striking dear little Willy!"

"You did!" returned Mr. Links, in surprise.

"Yes. Grace told me that she was afraid all was not right, and asked me if I would keep my eyes about me. She had her suspicions that nurse was not kind to the child."

"Ill treat that dear little fellow! The cruel wretch!"

"There is no telling how much the poor child may have suffered," continued Mrs. Links."

"I've seen her strike it many a time," said little Grace, who had come into the room with her grandmother.

"You have?"

"Oh yes, ma'am."

"Why didn't you tell your mamma?"

"I told nurse that if she didn't stop, I would. But, she said she would beat me half to death, if I did."

"And you were afraid to tell!"

"Yes ma'am!"

"Dreadful! Dreadful!"

"It's never good to trust children with servants," said Mr. Links.

"Never," replied Mrs. Links. "And these sweet ones must be entrusted to their tender mercies no longer."

"Oh, grandmother! I wish you would stay with us always," exclaimed Grace, looking up with eyes half full of tears. "Nurse wouldn't be unkind to us then."

"Ask grandpapa if he won't come and live here?" said Mrs. Links.

"Won't you, dear grandpapa?" urged the child, leaning her arms upon his knees and looking up with a glance of pleading affection into his face. "Say yes, grandpapa!"

The suddenness with which this was done, threw Mr. Links off his guard. Already affected by the information that the children had been suffering unkind treatment in the necessary absence of their mother, this appeal, made so earnestly and touchingly, affected him still more deeply. He found his own eyes growing dim, and feared to trust his voice in words.

"Won't you say yes, grandpapa? Oh do! Mother will be so glad."

"How do you know that she will be glad, dear?" half whispered Mr. Links.

"I heard her tell papa so this morning."

"Did you?"

"Yes; and papa said that he would be glad too. We'll all be glad. Won't you stay grandpapa! We'll all love you so?"

"I'll think about it dear," said Mr. Links in a husky voice, wiping his eyes as he spoke.

CHAPTER XV.

THE fact that little Willy was subjected to ill-treatment in the absence of his mother, enabled Grace and her husband to use a new and stronger argument against the pride and native independence of Mr. Links. Still the old man withheld his consent to the so much desired arrangement.

"How *can* I do this, Henry," he exclaimed on the third day after he had come into his son's family, "Me depend on the labor of Grace?—impossible! My food would choke me. Oh, that I could find some employment! My mind is still clear, and I am in good health. How hard to be thus set aside as worthless!"

"While you have nothing to do, father," said Henry, "you can have no income—no means of self-sustenance. Remain, then, with us, at least until you find employment."

"If I had employment, and was thus enabled to contribute to the support of the family, I might not so strongly object. Oh dear! Into what a strait in life am I brought! Who can tell what his future will be? How little dreamed I, years ago, of being reduced to an extremity like this. No, no, my son, I cannot make up my mind to this. It may be pride, or independence, that interposes the barrier—no matter, it is there, and, to me, seems insurmountable."

On the day this conversation took place between Henry Links and his father, Grace, so soon as she could get away from her school in the afternoon, dressed herself hurriedly, and went out. Her steps were directed towards the store of Mr. Markle, the gentleman who had interested himself in her favor. Mr. Markle saw, by the countenance of Grace, the moment she approached him, that she was concerned about something, and had come for advice or assistance. He received her kindly, and said, almost immediately,

"Is there anything I can do for you, Mrs. Links?"

"There is," replied Grace, a smile coming over her serious face, "or at least, something that you can do for another, for my sake."

"Anything that you ask, I think I may reasonably do," said Mr. Markle, smiling in turn.

"I don't know about that," was pleasantly answered. "However, in the case to come up for your consideration now, I think you may safely meet my wishes. My husband's father is in very extreme circumstances."

A slight shadow fell instantly on the countenance of Mr. Markle.

"Old Mr. Links," said he.

"Yes."

"I don't think he deserves any consideration from you," remarked the gentleman, in a grave voice.

"He is the father of my husband," was the simple, yet touching answer of Grace.

The tone, as well as the words, reached the heart of Mr. Markle.

"Moreover," she added, "he is now in extremity, and that should cancel all animosities, if any exist."

"It never cancelled them in his breast," said Mr. Markle. "Never can I forget the cruel spirit with which he trampled on your father when he was in extremity."

"Oh Sir! Do not speak of that now," quickly replied Grace, "let us forgive the past."

"The measure that men mete out to their fellows should, at some time in life, be meted out to them again. It is but a just retribution."

"Let us leave such matters with Him who seeks the eternal good of all," said Grace, solemnly. "He can only know where and when to apply the rod of correction. As for us, let us show mercy and forgive. If we forgive not men their trespasses, how can we expect God to forgive our trespasses."

"You are right, no doubt," replied Mr. Markle, "but there are some things that flesh and blood find it hard to bear."

"It is necessary for us to crucify the flesh sometimes," said Grace, smiling.

"As you can no doubt testify from experience," returned Mr. Markle, smiling in turn.

"Such violence is always good for the spirit. I, at least, find it so," said Grace.

"And I think I may safely trust to your experience. Well, what would you have me do?"

"Old Mr. Links, as I have said, is in great extremity. I learned this a short time ago, and, the moment it came to my knowledge, I sent him, as from an unknown friend, relief."

"I might almost say that you are too forgiving."

"No, I can never forgive more than I have had forgiven. Then I called to see him."

"And he did not turn from you as before?"

"Oh no, I found him completely broken down. Oh! how my heart pitied him! Poor old man!"

"It is a great change for him."

"Yes, yes!"

"Well, he has only himself to blame. He pitied none—had mercy on none. Is it any wonder that in his old age, the measure he meted out to others was measured to him again? I think not. Even in this life there comes to all a just reaction of consequences. The good or the evil that a man does, never falls to the earth dead. Acts are living things, and rarely, indeed, is it, that their vitality is extinguished."

"Come, Mr. Markle," said Grace, speaking in a pleasant, half chiding voice, "All this is unlike you. Mr Links is now crushed and humbled to the very earth. Let pity for one so stricken down find a place in your bosom."

"Where is he," asked Mr. Markle.

"At our house."

"Indeed." There was surprise, mingled slightly with displeasure in his voice. "And where is Mrs. Links, and that daughter who married the forger Paulette? Are they at your house also?"

"Yes."

Mr. Markle shook his head.

"I dont like this," said he.

"Why not," enquired Grace.

"You have enough, and more than enough, to bear already, without being burdened with the support of an entire family in addition to your own. It is not just, Mrs. Links. He must be humbled, indeed, to consent to lean against *you*, now that he is unable to stand alone. It does not in the least, I can assure you, raise him in my estimation."

"You are too hasty in your conclusions, Mr. Markle," said Grace, again speaking in a chiding voice.

"I dont know. Were I in his place, I would starve before I would, under present circumstances, take bread from your hands."

"I declare, Mr. Markle, you are as bad he is," said Grace.

"Pray dont say that."

"Well, you are. Now, the fact is, my husband's father is manifesting just the spirit you express. It required persuasion, in the first place, to get him into my house at all, and nothing but stratagem has kept him there since. The food that I have earned seems to choke him as he attempts to swallow it."

"Ah! That is as it should be," said Mr. Markle.

"I want him and mother, and Clara, to stay with us. But he will not listen to such an arrangement for a minute. Mother could take charge of my much neglected family, and Clara could help me in the school. Their presence, would, therefore, be a great relief to me. Besides, all this would do my husband good. Who knows but that it might be the means of restoring his health!"

Tears came into the eyes of Grace, and her voice trembled.

Mr. Markle was affected.

"Ah! That alters the case," said he. "And Mr. Links will not consent to remain?"

"So far he has positively refused."

"He has some pride left, then."

"Oh yes! Too much of it."

"No. It is the right kind of pride. I think more of him for it."

"I'm glad," said Grace, smiling once more, "that something gives you a prepossession in his favor."

"Don't flatter yourself that it is very strong. There are some acts in men that we find it hard either to forget or forgive. But, what is it that you wish me to do in this matter?"

"If Mr. Links had employment by which he could earn a few hundred dollars a year, I think he would waive his present objection to coming in and forming a part of our family."

"And do you want him so badly?"

"Oh yes! You don't know how much I need the presence of mother and Clara. Already mother has discovered what I had too good reason to fear was the case, that the nurse was unkind to my babe while I was absent in school."

"Can it be possible! The wretch!" exclaimed Mr. Markle, indignantly.

"How were you treated by your husband's mother, in former times?" asked the gentleman, after a few moments' pause.

"Always with the greatest kindness. She called to see me as soon as we were married, and manifested the tenderest affection for me."

"This was not the case with her daughter?"

"Oh, yes it was! We were intimate friends at school; so intimate, that her father removed her on my account."

"Was that so?"

"Yes, this was the reason of her being sent away to the boarding school."

"Where she became acquainted with Paulette?"

"Yes."

"Verily, if this isn't a case where the father's sin has been visited upon the child, I never heard of one! Then there was no opposition towards you from Mrs. Links and Clara? Pardon me the freedom with which I speak on so delicate a subject. My interest in you must be my excuse."

"Oh no! None in the least. But for Mr. Links I would have been received into the family with the utmost cordiality."

"Well—well! That considerably alters the case. I never heard any thing against Mrs. Links."

"Nor any one else. She is a good woman. Her trials have been severe."

"This I can readily imagine. And you wish to have her in your family?"

"Oh yes. I can then leave my husband and children and go into my school with a light heart."

"I will see what can be done, then. Call about this time to-morrow."

On the next day, Grace called at the store of Mr. Markle as desired.

"Have you any good news for me?" said she, as she came in.

"Perhaps so," replied Mr. Markle, with an expression of countenance interpreted by Grace as altogether favorable.

"You have found him employment, then?"

"I have found him a very good opening I think, and one that may lead to a good business in the end."

"Have you indeed," said Grace with much animation.

"I saw a gentleman this morning, who belongs to a large manufacturing firm at the east. His business here, at present, is to establish an agency, and he asked me if I knew a capable trustworthy person whom I could recommend for the service. I believe that your father-in-law is just the man to suit in all respects."

"Do you? And did you say so?"

"I did."

"Oh, I am so grateful to you. And will he receive the appointment?"

"I presume so; that is, if he is willing to accept of it."

"Of course he will be willing; nay, glad of the opportunity to get employment."

"Will you ask him to call upon me to-morrow morning?"

"Certainly."

As Grace made this reply, a shade of thought flitted over her countenance. She stood looking upon the floor for some moments. Then lifting her eyes to the face of Mr. Markle, she said—

"I think I would rather that you would send him a note, asking him to call and see you."

"Why so, Mrs. Links?" asked the gentleman.

"He is an old man, and some natural feelings of pride and independence still linger in his heart. I wish to spare the pain that might be occasioned if he knew that employment came through my intercession."

Mr. Markle gazed for some moments into the face of Mrs. Links, whose eyes had dropped to the floor.

"My dear madam!" he at length said, with a feeling that he could not hide. "Your goodness overcomes me. If it be thus that you act towards your enemies, how must it be with your friends?"

"He is not my enemy, Mr. Markle," replied Grace.

"He has been; and one of the bitterest enemies you have known since the sunlight first shone upon you. But, you are heaping coals of fire on his head."

"Oh! don't say that!" returned Grace. "Do not tempt my heart to feel, for an instant, an emotion of triumph, at the great change time has produced. Such an emotion would cause in me the keenest pangs; would rob me of all the pleasure I now receive in the doing of what is right."

"Forgive me," said Mr. Markle, who now saw still deeper into the character of Grace, and felt for her a more profound respect. Nay, he was even humbled as he measured the quality of his own feelings by those of this excellent woman. "It would be a better and happier world, if all acted from the heavenly principles that govern you," he added in a voice that was much subdued. "Nay it would be heaven upon earth."

CHAPTER XVI.

On the day following this interview of Grace with Mr. Markle, as old Mr. Links was preparing to go out for the purpose of again trying to get some employment, a letter was brought to him.

"Who is that from?" asked Mrs. Links, as she saw her husband's countenance change while glancing over its contents.

"It is from a gentleman named Markle," replied Mr. Links.

"What has he to say?"

"He wishes to see me."

"Ah? For what purpose?"

"He says, that he can probably find an opening for me in a business that will just suit me."

"Oh, Herman! If this be so how thankful I will be," said Mrs. Links in a voice that trembled from a sudden excitement of feeling. "If you find employment, you will no longer object to remaining here."

"I cannot remain to be dependent."

"But, if independent, through your own efforts?"

"That will alter the case," replied Mr. Links.

"See Mr. Markle at once."

"I will call upon him immediately. Ah! I already begin to fear that these suddenly excited hopes are doomed to disappointment."

"Come home early," said Mrs. Links, laying her hand upon the arm of her husband, as he was about going out soon after the receipt of the note from Mr. Markle. "I shall be as restless as the wandering dove until I see you again. Oh! that this new hope may not prove vain."

Three hours elapsed before Mr. Links returned. There was a light in his countenance as he entered the room where his wife sat alone, that said "good news," ere his lips had time to give utterance to a word.

"Better than I expected," said he, in a low voice, as he sat down beside her, and looked calmly in her face.

"Have you found employment," she said, striving, as she spoke, not to let the trembling expectation of her heart betray itself too fully in her voice.

"Yes," was his simple answer.

"Oh, I am so glad!" exclaimed Mrs. Links, clasping her hands together, "I am so glad! But what kind of employment?"

"I called to see Mr. Markle, as he desired," said Mr. Links, "and was met by him with a kindness not manifested before for years. Indeed, the last time I saw him, his manner was so repulsive as to be almost insulting. Now, he was considerate, and treated me with much delicacy. He said that a gentleman was in the city for the purpose of creating an agency for a manufacturing establishment

to which he belonged, and had asked him to find, if possible, an individual who could be entrusted with the business.' 'I have already mentioned to him your name,' said he, 'and have sent for you in order that we might confer on the subject. Are you doing anything?'

"Nothing," I replied.

"How would you like an agency and commission business?" he enquired.

"I am ready for anything within the range of my ability," I promptly answered.

"I think, then, that this would suit you," said he; "and, if you desire it, I will send a note to the gentleman to call around." This was accordingly done. The interview resulted as I desired. We entered into an engagement before separating. A store is to be taken immediately, and a consignment of goods sent on as soon as he returns east. All expenses are to be guaranteed to me for the first year, and money to begin with to be left in the hands of Mr. Markle. The commission is liberal, and will, I do not in the least doubt, give me a handsome income."

"Oh! How thankful I am!" said Mrs. Links, when her husband ceased speaking, and her eyes looked upwards, as her heart lifted itself in acknowledgments to heaven.

Not once did it cross the mind of Mr. Links that for this favorable turn of fortune he was indebted to the intercession of Grace. It never occurred to him while he talked to her of the good prospects opening before him, that her hand had removed obstructions from his way, and made the course plain before him.

From that time the families became one. Mr. Links, though he still felt reluctant to make a part of his son's family, lest it should seem as if he were dependent upon the labour of Grace, had no longer, any reasons to urge against the arrangement, and did not, therefore, make any opposition. Moreover, his two sweet grand-children had made their way into his heart, and their love had thrown itself in bonds around him. Grace, too, interested him more and more. There was a beauty in her goodness, that put on some new charm daily, and made him feel happiest when near her.

In due time Mr. Links opened his place of business and commenced receiving goods. Once more he appeared among his old business friends, and, as he came to them as the agent of an extensive manufacturing establishment, and with goods to dispose of that many of them wanted, he brought a passport to their respect. He was no longer poor old Links, the humble suppliant for employment, but Mr. Herman Links, Agent for the ——— Manufacturing Company. Some few thought proper to remember him as a broken merchant, by whom they had, aforetime, lost heavily, but the majority waived the past, and took him for just what he was worth in the present.

By the end of a year it was plain to Mr. Links that the agency he had taken was going to turn out far better than he had anticipated.

His clear profit had been over fifteen hundred dollars, and his line of sales was rapidly on the increase. The health of Henry having improved, he now went every day to his father's counting-room, and engaged in business for a few hours, thus rendering him desirable aid, and receiving therefor a certain share of the profit.

The union of the two families had grown more and more perfect, and there was a mutual dependence among them that drew them closer and closer together. Grace gave herself up entirely to her school, in which she now had the assistance of Clara, while Mrs. Links took charge of the whole household, as if it had been her own. Their evening re-unions, when the labor of the day was done, were happy seasons. If there was one restless heart among them all, it was the heart of old Mr. Links. Gradually, as it grew better and better with him in external things, and he felt more and more his independence, a latent desire to separate from his son's family fixed itself in his heart. All the pride of his character had not been crushed out. He had been driven by the force of circumstances, whose power he tried in vain to resist, into a temporary dependence upon his daughter-in-law. In the utmost extremity, help had come from her willing hands. It seemed to him, at times, as if every body not only knew this, but was ever thinking about it; and the better the new business became; and the brighter the prospects that opened before him, the more did these thoughts disturb him. Strange as it may seem, as this state of mind continued, something like a thin veil was drawn before his eyes when he looked at Grace, and it hid a portion of her loveliness. The obligations that he and his were under to her, at first felt by him to be of the highest character, assumed an appearance of less importance.

Remotely did Mr. Links at length begin to hint his desire to be again in his own house. His wife, who understood him, affected not to perceive, at first, his meaning. But, in time, he made it so plain, that she was forced to remark upon the subject. He then said, plainly, that he thought it would be better for them to be to themselves once more.

"I shall feel a great deal more independent," said he, "than I have ever felt here."

"But, Herman," replied Mrs. Links, "you forget how really necessary our presence is here. Grace could not get along without us."

"How did she get on before we came?" returned Mr. Links, rather coldly.

"She was worn down with care, added to severe toil; and her children were unkindly treated by domestics, while she was absent in school."

"She will have to be more judicious in her selection of domestics. Good ones are certainly to be found. Let her get a competent house-keeper to see to every thing. Some one who will take your place."

"There is no one who can really take my place."

"I can't see any reason why you should be compelled to be an

upper servant here," said Mr. Links, with some asperity of manner.

"Don't speak in that way, Herman! I am no upper servant; but at the head of this dear family, and I do my work with a loving spirit. And as for our obligations to Grace, they are so great that we can never repay them."

"What obligations, pray," said Mr. Links sharply.

"She saved the life of our son by her womanly courage and devotion. For that I can never sufficiently love her, or do for her. Acting from the same brave and noble spirit, she provided a home for him and his children, and an asylum for us when the storm of adversity beat so sharply upon us. Ah, Herman—"

"No," said Mr. Links, quickly interrupting his wife, "I will not admit this. We came here on a visit, and she managed to keep us here, much against my will, for several days. At the end of that time I got my present situation, which I would have obtained any how. No! We are not under such great obligations to her. She is a good girl. She has done nobly; I will admit all that. But I don't feel under obligation to her personally. No, no!"

Mrs. Links sighed heavily, but made no reply. A brief silence ensued and then he went away.

During the morning, business led Mr. Links to the store of Mr. Markle, who had a good many enquiries to make in regard to his success, and the prospect before him. During the conversation that ensued, some allusion was made to Grace—

"Do you know," said Markle, smiling, "that you are entirely indebted to this excellent woman for your present business?"

"I do not," replied Mr. Links, with a sudden expression of surprise.

"Well, you are."

"How so? Will you explain?"

"Upon her personal application to me, and earnest solicitation in your behalf, I procured you the agency you now hold."

"You cannot be in earnest!" said Mr. Links, in a voice that fell suddenly almost to a whisper.

"Entirely in earnest," replied Mr. Markle. "But for her, you would never have been even thought of in this business. Ah sir! You were fortunate in having such an angel to take up your cause; for an angel she is. Not content with securing you this desirable place, she wished me to communicate with you in such a way as not to leave room for a suspicion in your mind that she had any agency in the affair."

"And why?" Mr. Links spoke with earnestness.

"She wished to save your feelings. To remove all cause for a sense of obligation towards her. I shall never forget my interview with her on that occasion! I have tried to be a better man since. Happy are you and yours in dwelling under the same roof with her; in breathing the atmosphere of goodness that surrounds her."

For some time Mr. Links stood lost in thought. Then bowing, he turned away and retired without uttering a word.

The weak pride of the old man's heart was completely subdued. The thin, obscuring veil which had, for some time, been drawn between him and Grace was rent away, and he saw her, as before, but increased in loveliness.

A few years have passed. The family of father and son still gather at one fireside, that is made bright and warm by the presence of her to whom all owe so much. And yet, she seems unconscious of having done more than a loving duty, for which she has already received an abundant reward.

THE END.



J. LEADER SC.

CAPTAIN ROOK.

For to have plenty, it is a pleasant thing
In my conceit; and to have it aye in hand.

Ship of Fools.



MR. PIGEON.

If the pigeons are small, a quarter of an hour will do them; but they will take twenty minutes, if large.

Mrs Fumblers Cookery.



THE "LION" OF A PARTY.

God shield us! a lion among ladies is a most dreadful thing.

Midsummer night's dream



THE YOUNG LORD.

These are the lilies, glorious as Solomons, who toil not, neither
do they spin.

Shelley.



THE FASHIONABLE 'AUTHORESS.

How fluent nonsense trickles from her pen.



THE YOUNG SQUIRE.

— By smiling Fortune blessed
With large demesnes, hereditary wealth.

Somerville



THE SPORTING GENTLEMAN.

—The breed of noble bloods.

Julius Caesar.



J. PEAKE SC.

THE FARMER'S DAUGHTER.

Her complexion was fair, a little injured by the sun, but overspread with such a bloom, that the finest ladies would have exchanged all their white for it.

JOHN G. BROWN.

2
H E A D S

OF

T H E P E O P L E :

DRAWN BY

KENNY MEADOWS.

WITH

ORIGINAL ESSAYS,

BY

**DOUGLAS JERROLD, WILLIAM HOWITT, NIMROD,
W. THACKERAY, &c. &c.**

PHILADELPHIA:
CAREY AND HART. Digitized by Google
1844.

1

T. E. & P. G. COLLINS, PRINTERS.

HEADS OF THE PEOPLE.

CAPTAIN ROOK AND MR. PIGEON.

BY WILLIAM TRACKERBAY.

THE statistic mongers and dealers in geography have calculated to a nicety how many quatern loaves, bars of iron, pigs of lead, sacks of wool, Turks, Quakers, Methodists, Jews, Catholics, and Church of England men, are consumed or produced in the different countries of this wicked world: I should like to see an accurate table showing the rogues and dupes of each nation; the calculation would form a pretty matter for a philosopher to speculate upon. The mind loves to repose, and broods benevolently over this expansive theme. What thieves are there at Paris, oh, heavens! and what a power of rogues with pigtailed and mandarin buttons at Pekin! Crowds of swindlers are there at this very moment pursuing their trade at St. Petersburg: how many scoundrels are saying their prayers alongside of Don Carlos! how many scores are jobbing under the pretty nose of Queen Christine! what an inordinate number of rascals is there to be sure puffing tobacco and drinking flat small beer in all the capitals of Germany; or else, without a rag to their ebony backs, swigging quass out of calabashes, and, smeared over with palm oil, lolling at the doors of clay huts in the sunny city of Timbuctoo! It is not necessary to make any more topographical allusions, or, for illustrating the above position, to go through the whole Gazetteer; but he is a bad philosopher who has not all these things in mind, and does not in his speculations or his estimate of mankind duly consider and weigh them. And it is fine and consolatory to think, that thoughtful nature, which has provided sweet flowers for the humming bee; fair running streams for glittering fish; store of kids, deer, goats and other fresh meats for roaring lions; for active cats, mice; for mice, cheese; and so on; establishing throughout the whole of her realm the doctrine that where a demand is, there will be a supply (see the romances of Adam Smith, Malthus, and Ricardo, and the philosophical works of Miss Martineau): I say it is consolatory to think that, as nature has provided flies for the food of fishes, and flowers for bees, so she has created fools for rogues; and thus the scheme is consistent throughout. Yes, observation, with extensive view, will discover Captain Rooks all over the world, and Mr. Pigeons made for their benefit. Wherever shines the sun, you are sure to find Folly basking in it; and knavery is the shadow at Folly's heels.

It is not, however, necessary to go to Petersburg or Pekin for rogues (and in truth I don't know whether the Timbuctoo Captain Rooks prefer cribbage or billiards). "We are not birds," as the Irishman says, "to be in half-a-dozen places at once; so let us pretermitt all considerations of rogues in other countries, examining only those who flourish under our very noses. I have travelled much, and seen many men and cities; and, in truth, I think that our country of England produces the best soldiers, sailors, razors, tailors, brewers, hatters, and rogues, of all. Especially, there is no cheat like an English cheat. Our society produces them in the greatest numbers as well as of the greatest excellence. We supply all Europe with them. I defy you to point out a great city of the continent where half-a-dozen of them are not to be found: proofs of

our enterprise, and samples of our home manufacture. Try Rome, Cheltenham, Baden, Teopltitz, Madrid, or Czarkoesselo: I have been in every one of them, and give you my honour that the Englishman is the best rascal to be found in all; better than your eager Frenchman; your swaggering Irishman with a red velvet waistcoat and red whiskers; your grave Spaniard, with horrid goggle eyes and profuse diamond shirt-pins; your tallow-faced German baron with white moustache and double chin, fat pudgy, dirty fingers, and great gold thumb-ring; better even than your nondescript Russian—swindler and spy as he is by loyalty and education—the most dangerous antagonist we have. Who has the best coat even at Vienna? who has the neatest britzska at Baden? who drinks the best champagne at Paris? Captain Rook, to be sure, of her Britannic majesty's service:—he *has* been of the service, that is to say, but often finds it convenient to sell out.

The life of a blackleg, which is the name contemptuously applied to Captain Rook in his own country, is such an easy, comfortable, careless, merry one, that I can't conceive why all the world do not turn Captain Rooks; unless, may be, there are some mysteries and difficulties in it which the vulgar know nothing of, and which only men of real genius can overcome. Call on Captain Rook in the day (in London, he lives about St. James's; abroad, he has the very best rooms in the very best hotels), and you will find him at one o'clock dressed in the very finest *robe de chambre* before a breakfast table covered with the prettiest patties and delicacies possible; smoking, perhaps, one of the biggest Meerschaum pipes you ever saw; reading, possibly, "The Morning Post," or a novel (he has only one volume in his whole room, and that from a circulating library); or having his hair dressed; or talking to a tailor about waistcoat patterns; or drinking soda water with a glass of sherry; all this he does every morning, and it does not seem very difficult, and lasts until three. At three, he goes to a horse-dealer's, and lounges there for half an hour; at four he is to be seen in the window of his club; at five he is cantering and curveting in Hyde Park with one or two more (he does not know any ladies, but has many male acquaintances: some, stout old gentlemen riding cobs, who knew his family, and give him a surly grunt of recognition; some, very young lads, with pale dissolute faces, little moustaches, perhaps, or, at least, little tufts on their chin, who hail him eagerly as a man of fashion): at seven, he has a dinner at Long's or at the Clarendon; and so to bed very likely at five in the morning, after a quiet game of whist, broiled bones, and punch.

Perhaps he dines early at a tavern in Covent Garden; after which, you will see him, at the theatre in a private box (Captain Rook affects the Olympic a good deal). In the box, besides himself, you may remark a young man—very young—one of the lads who spoke to him in the Park this morning, and a couple of ladies: one shabby, melancholy, raw-boned, with numberless small white ringlets, large hands and feet, and a faded light-blue silk gown; she has a large cap, trimmed with yellow, and all sorts of crumpled flowers and greasy blond lace; she wears large gilt ear-rings, and sits back, and nobody speaks to her, and she to nobody, except to say, "Law, Maria, how well you *do* look to-night: there's a man opposite has been staring at you this three hours: I'm blest if it isn't him we saw in the Park, dear!"

"I wish, Hanna, you'd 'old your tongue, and not bother me about the men. You don't believe Miss Ickman, Freddy, *do* you?" says Maria, smiling fondly on Freddy. Maria is sitting in front: she says she is twenty-three, though Miss Hickman knows very well she is thirty-one (Freddy is just of age). She wears a purple-velvet gown, three different gold bracelets on each arm, as many rings on each finger of each hand; to one is hooked a gold smelling bottle: she has an enormous fan, a laced pocket handkerchief, a Cashmere shawl, which is continually falling off, and exposing very unnecessarily a pair of very white shoulders: she talks loud, always lets her playbill drop into the pit, and smells most pungently of Mr. Delcroix's shop. After this description it is not at all

necessary to say who Maria is ; Miss Hickman is her companion, and they live together in a very snug little house in May-fair, which has just been new furnished *à la Louis Quatorze* by Freddy, as we are positively informed. It is even said, that the little carriage, with two little white ponies, which Maria drives herself in such a fascinating way through the Park, was purchased for her by Freddy too ; aye, and that Captain Rook got it for him—a great bargain, of course.

Such is Captain Rook's life. Can any thing be more easy ? Suppose Maria says, "Come home, Rook, and heat a cold chicken with us, and a glass of hiced champagne ;" and suppose he goes, and after chicken—just for fun—Maria proposes a little chicken hazard ;—she only plays for shillings, while Freddy, a little bolder, won't mind half-pound stakes himself. Is there any great harm in all this ? Well, after half-an-hour, Maria grows tired, and Miss Hickman has been nodding asleep in the corner long ago ; and so off the two ladies set, candle in hand.

"D—n it, Fred," says Captain Rook, pouring out for that young gentleman his fifteenth glass of champagne, "what luck you are in, if you did but know how to back it !"

What more natural and even kind of Rook than to say this ? Fred is evidently an inexperienced player ; and every experienced player knows that there is nothing like backing your luck. Freddy does. Well ; fortune is proverbially variable ; and it is not at all surprising that Freddy, after having had so much luck at the commencement of the evening, should have the tables turned on him at some time or other.

Freddy loses.

It is deuced unlucky, to be sure, that he should have won all the little *coups*, and lost all the great ones ; but there is a plan which the commonest play-man knows, an infallible means of retrieving yourself at play : it is simply doubling your stake. Say, you lose a guinea ; you bet two guineas, which if you win, you win a guinea and your original stake : if you lose, you have but to bet four guineas on the third stake, eight on the fourth, sixteen on the fifth, thirty-two on the sixth, and so on. It stands to reason that you cannot lose *always* ; and the very first time you win, all your losings are made up to you. There is but one drawback to this infallible process : if you begin at a guinea, double every time you lose, and lose fifteen times, you will have lost exactly sixteen thousand three hundred and sixty-three guineas ; a sum which probably exceeds the amount of your yearly income :—mine is considerably under that figure.

Freddy does not play this game, then, yet ; but being a poor-spirited creature, as we have seen he must be by being afraid to win, he is equally poor-spirited when he begins to lose, he is frightened that is, increases his stakes, and backs his ill luck : when a man does this, it is all over with him.

When Captain Rook goes home (the sun is peering through the shutters of the little drawing-room in Curzon Street, and the ghastly footboy, oh, how bleared his eyes look as he opens the door !) ; when Captain Rook goes home, he has Freddy's I O U's in his pocket to the amount, say, of three hundred pounds. Some people say, that Maria has half of the money when it is paid ; but this I don't believe : is captain Rook the kind of fellow to give up a purse when his hand has once clawed hold of it ?

Be this, however, true or not, it concerns us very little. The captain goes home to Brook Street, plunges into bed much too tired to say his prayers, and wakes the next morning at twelve to go over such another day, which we have just chalked out for him. As for Freddy, not poppy, nor mandragora, nor all the soda water at the chemist's can ever medicine him to that sweet sleep which he might have had but for his loss. "If I had but played my king of hearts," sighs Fred, "and kept back my trump, but there's no standing against a fellow who turns up a king seven times running : if I *had* even but pulled up when Thomas (curse him !) brought up that infernal Curacoa punch, I should have saved a couple of hundred ;" and so on, go Freddy's lamentations. Oh, luck-

less Freddy! dismal Freddy! silly gaby of a Freddy! you are hit now, and there is no cure for you but bleeding you almost to death's door. 'The homœopathic maxim of *similia similibus*, which means, I believe, that you are to be cured "by a hair of the dog that bit you," must be put in practice with regard to Freddy—only not in homœopathic infinitesimal doses: no hair of the dog that bit him; but *vice versa*, the dog of the hair that tickled him. Freddy has begun to play;—a mere trifle at first, but he must play it out; he must go the whole dog now, or there is no chance for him. He must play until he can play no more; he *will* play until he has not a shilling left to play with, when, perhaps, he may turn out an honest man, though the odds are against him: the betting is in favour of his being a swindler always; a rich or a poor one, as the case may be. I need not tell Freddy's name, I think, now; it stands on his card;—

MR. FREDERICK PIGEON,

LONG'S HOTEL.

I have said the chances are, that Frederick Pigeon, Esq. will become a rich or a poor swindler, though the first chance, it must be confessed, is very remote. I once heard an actor, who could not write, speak, or even read English; who was not fit for any trade in the world, and had not the nous to keep an apple-stall, and scarcely even enough sense to make a member of parliament; I once, I say, heard an actor—whose only qualifications were a large pair of legs, a large voice, and a very large neck—curse his fate and his profession, by which, do what he would, he could only make eight guineas a-week. "No men," said he, with a great deal of justice, "was so ill paid as 'dramatic artists;' they laboured for nothing all their youths, and had no provision for old age." With this, he sighed, and called for (it was on a Saturday night) the forty-ninth glass of brandy-and-water which he had drunk in the course of the week.

The excitement of his profession, I make no doubt, caused my friend Clap-trap to consume this quantity of spirit-and-water, besides beer, in the morning after rehearsal; and I could not help musing over his fate. It is a hard one. To eat, drink, work a little, and be jolly; to be paid twice as much as you are worth, and then to go to ruin; to drop off the tree when you are swelled out, seedy, and over-ripe; and to lie rotting in the mud underneath, until at last you mingle with it.

Now, badly as the actor is paid (and the reader will the more readily pardon the above episode, because, in reality, it has nothing to do with the subject in hand), and luckless as his fate is, the lot of the poor blackleg is cast lower still. You never hear of a rich gambler; or of one who wins in the end. Where does all the money go to which is lost among them? Did you ever play a game at loo for sixpences? At the end of the night a great many of those small coins have been lost, and, in consequence, won: but ask the table all round; one man has won three shillings; two have neither lost nor won; one rather thinks he has lost; and the three others have lost two pounds each. Is not this the fact, known to everybody who indulges in round games, and especially the noble game of loo? I often think that the devil's books, as cards are called, are let out to us from Old Nick's circulating library, and that he lays his paw upon a certain part of the winnings, and carries it off privily: else, what becomes of all the money?

For instance, there is the gentleman whom the newspapers call "a noble earl of sporting celebrity;"—if he has lost a shilling, according to the newspaper accounts, he has lost fifty millions: he drops fifty thousand pounds at the Derby, just as you and I would lay down twopence-halfpenny for half an ounce of Macabaw. Who has won these millions? Is it Mr. Crockford, or Mr. Bond,

or Mr. *Salon-des-Etrangers*? (I do not call these latter gentlemen gamblers, for their speculation is a certainty); but who wins his money, and everybody else's money who plays and loses? Much money is staked in the absence of Mr. Crockford; many notes are given without the interference of the Bonds; there are hundreds of thousands of gamblers who are *étrangers* even to the *Salon des Etrangers*.

No, my dear sir, it is not in the public gambling houses that the money is lost: it is not in them that your virtue is chiefly in danger. Better by half lose your income, your fortune, or your master's money, in a decent public hell, than in the private society of such men as my friend Captain Rook; but we are again and again digressing: the point is, is the Captain's trade a good one, and does it yield tolerably good interest for outlay and capital?

To the latter question first:—at this very season of May, when the rooks are very young, have you not, my dear friend, often tasted them in pies?—they are then so tender that you cannot tell the difference between them and pigeons. So, in like manner, our Rook has been in his youth undistinguishable from a pigeon. He does as he has been done by: yea, he has been plucked as even now he plucks his friend Mr. Frederick Pigeon. Say that he began the world with ten thousand pounds; every maravedi of this is gone; and may be considered as the capital which he has sacrificed to learn his trade. Having spent £10,000, then, or an annuity of £650, he must look to a larger interest for his money—say fifteen hundred, two thousand, or three thousand pounds, decently to repay his risk and labour. Besides the money sunk in the first place, his profession requires continual annual outlays; as thus—

Horses, carriages, (including Epsom, Goodwood, Ascot, &c.)	£500 0 0
Lodgings, servants, and board	350 0 0
Watering places and touring	300 0 0
Dinners to give	150 0 0
Pocket-money	150 0 0
Gloves, handkerchiefs, perfumery, and tobacco (very moderate)	150 0 0
Tailor's bills (£100 say, never paid)	0 0 0
TOTAL	£1,800 0 0

I defy any man to carry on the profession in a decent way under the above sum: ten thousand sunk, and sixteen hundred annual expenses; no, it is *not* a good profession: it is *not* good interest for one's money: it is *not* a fair remuneration for a gentleman of birth, industry, and genius: and my friend Claptrap, who growls about *his* pay, may bless his eyes that he was not born a gentleman and bred up to such an unprofitable calling as this. Considering his trouble, his outlay, his birth and breeding, the Captain is most wickedly and basely rewarded. And when he is obliged to retreat; when his hand trembles, his credit is fallen, his bills laughed at by every money-lender in Europe, his tailors rampant and inexorable—in fact, when the *coupe* of life will *sauter* for him no more—who will help the play-worn veteran? As Mitchell sings after Aristophanes—

“In glory he was seen, when his years as yet *were green*;
But now when his dotage is on him,
God help him!—for no eye of those who pass him by,
Throws a look of compassion upon him.”

Who indeed will help him?—not his family, for he has bled his father, his uncle, his old grandmother; he has had slices out of his sisters' portions, and quarrelled with his brothers-in-law; the old people are dead; the young ones hate him, and will give him nothing. Who will help him?—not his friends; in the first place, my dear sir, a man's friends very seldom do; in the second place, it is Captain Rook's business not to keep but to give up his friends. His acquaintances do not last more than a year; the time, namely during which he is employed in plucking them; then they part. Pigeon has not a single

feather left to his tail, and how should he help Rook, whom, *ex recis*, he has learned to detest most cordially, and has found out to be a rascal? When Rook's ill day comes, it is simply because he has no more friends; he has exhausted them all; plucked every one clean as the palm of your hand. And to arrive at the conclusion, Rook has been spending sixteen hundred a year, and the prime of his life, and has moreover sunk ten thousand pounds! Is this a proper reward for a gentleman? I say it is a sin and a shame, that an English gentleman should be allowed thus to drop down the stream without a single hand to help him.

The moral of the above remarks, I take to be this: that blacklegging is as bad a trade as can be; and so let parents and guardians look to it, and not apprentice their children to such a villanous scurvy way of living.

It must be confessed, however, that there are some individuals who have for the profession such a natural genius that no entreaties or example of parents will keep them from it, and no restraint or occupation occasioned by another calling. They do what the Christians do not do; they leave all to follow their master, the devil; they cut friends, families, and good, thriving, profitable trades to put up with this one, that is both unthrifty and unprofitable. They are in regiments: ugly whispers about certain midnight games at blind-hooker, and a few odd bargains in horseflesh, are borne abroad, and Cornet Rook receives the gentlest hint in the world that he had better sell out. They are in counting-houses, with a promise of partnership, for which papa is to lay down a handsome premium; but the firm of Hobbs, Bobbs, and Higgory, can never admit a young gentleman who is a notorious gambler, is much oftener at the races than his desk, and has bills daily falling due at his private banker's. The father, that excellent man old Sam Rook, so well known on 'Change in the war-time, discovers, at the end of five years, that his son has spent rather more than the four thousand pounds intended for his partnership, and cannot, in common justice to his other thirteen children, give him a shilling more. A pretty pass for flash young Tom Rook, with four horses in the stables, a protemporaneous Mrs. Rook, very likely, in an establishment near the Regent's Park, and a bill for three hundred and seventy-five pounds coming due on the fifth of next month!

Sometimes young Rook is destined to the bar; and I am glad to introduce one of these gentlemen and his history to the notice of the reader.

He was the son of an amiable gentleman, the Reverend Athanasius Rook, who took high honours at Cambridge in the year 1; was a fellow of Trinity in the year 2; and so continued a fellow and tutor of the College until a living fell vacant, on which he seized. It was only two hundred and fifty pounds a year; but the fact is, Athanasius was in love. Miss Gregory, a pretty demure simple governess at Miss Mickle's establishment for young ladies in Cambridge (where the reverend gentleman used often of late to take his tea), had caught the eye of the honest college tutor; and in Trinity walks, and up and down the Trumpington road, he walked with her (and another young lady of course), talked with her, and told his love.

Miss Gregory had not a rap, as might be imagined; but she loved Athanasius with her whole soul and strength, and was the most orderly, cheerful, tender, smiling, bustling, little wife that ever a country parson was blest withal. Athanasius took a couple of pupils at a couple of hundred guineas each, and so made out a snug income; aye, and laid by for a rainy day—a little portion for Harriet, when she should grow up and marry, and a help for 'Tom at college and at the bar. For you must know there were two little Rooks now crowing in the rookery; and very happy were father and mother, I can tell you, to put meat down their tender little throats. Oh, if ever a man was good and happy it was Athanasius: if ever a woman was happy and good, it was his wife; not the whole parish, not the whole county, not the whole kingdom, could produce such a snug rectory or such a pleasant *menage*.

Athanasius's fame as a scholar, too, was great; and as his charges were very high, and as he received but two pupils, there was, of course, much anxiety among wealthy parents to place their children under his care. Future squires, bankers, yea lords and dukes, came to profit by his instructions, and were led by him gracefully over the "Asses' bridge" into the sublime regions of mathematics, or through the syntax into the pleasant paths of classic lore.

In the midst of these companions, Tom Rook grew up; more fondled and petted, of course, than they; cleverer than they; as handsome, dashing, well-instructed a lad, for his years as ever went to college to be a senior wrangler, and went down without any such honour.

Fancy, then, our young gentleman installed at college, whither his father has taken him, and with fond veteran recollections has surveyed hall and grass-plots, and the old porter, and the old fountain, and the old rooms in which he used to live. Fancy the soba of good little Mrs. Rook, as she parted with her boy; and the tears of sweet pale Harriet as she clung round his neck, and brought him (in a silver paper, slobbered with many tears) a little crimson silk purse, (with two guineas of her own in it, poor thing!) Fancy all this, and fancy young Tom, sorry too, but yet restless and glad, panting for the new life opening upon him; the freedom, the joy of the manly struggle for fame, which he vows he will win. Tom Rook, in other words, is installed at Trinity College, attends lectures, reads at home, goes to chapel, uses wine parties moderately, and bids fair to be one of the topmost men of his year.

Tom goes down for the Christmas vacation. (What a man he has grown, and how his sister and mother quarrel which shall walk with him down the village; and what stories the old gentleman lugs out with his old port, and how he quotes *Æschylus*, to be sure!) The pupils are away too, and the three have Tom in quiet. Alas! I fear the place has grown a little too quiet for Tom: however, he reads very stoutly of mornings; and sister Harriet peeps with a great deal of wonder into huge books of scribbling paper, containing many strange diagrams, and complicate arrangements of *x's* and *y's*.

May comes, and the college examinations: the delighted parent receives at breakfast, on the 10th of that month, two letters, as follows:

FROM THE REV. SOLOMON SNORTER TO THE REV. ATHANASIOS ROOK.

Trinity, May 10.

Dear Credo*—I wish you joy. Your lad is the best man of his year, and I hope in four more to see him at our table. In classics he is, my dear friend, *facile princeps*; in mathematics he was run hard (*entre nous*) by a lad of the name of Snick, a Westmoreland man and a sizer. We must keep up Thomas to his mathematics, and I have no doubt we shall make a fellow and a wrangler of him.

I send you his college bill, £105 10s.; rather heavy, but this is the first term, and that you know is expensive: I shall be glad to give you a receipt for it. By the way, the young man is *rather* too fond of amusement, and lives with a very expensive set. Give him a lecture on this score.—Yours,

SOL. SNORTER.

Next comes Mr. Tom Rook's own letter, it is long, modest; we only give the postscript:

P.S.—Dear father, I forgot to say that, as I live in the very best set in the University (Lord Bagwig, the Duke's eldest son you know, vows he will give me a living), I have been led into one or two expenses which will frighten you: I lost £30 to the honourable Mr. Deucease (a son of Lord Crabs) at Bagwigs, the other day at dinner; and owe £54 more for deserts and hiring horses, which I can't send into Snorter's bill.† Hiring horses is so deuced expensive; next term I must have a nag of my own, that's positive.

The reverend Athanasius read the postscript with much less gusto than the letter: however, Tom has done his duty, and the old gentleman won't balk his

* This is most probably a joke on the Christian name of Mr. Rook.

† It is, or was, the custom for young gentlemen of Cambridge to have unlimited credit with tradesmen, whom the college tutors paid, and then sent the bills to the parents of the young men.

pleasure; so he sends him £100, with a "God bless you!" and Mamma adds, in a postscript, that "he must always keep well with his aristocratic friends, for he was made only for the best society."

A year or two passes on: Tom comes home for the vacations, but Tom is sadly changed; he has grown haggard and pale. At the second year's examination (owing to an unlucky illness) Tom was not classed at all; and Snick, the Westmoreland man, has carried every thing before him. Tom drinks more after dinner than his father likes; he is always riding about and dining in the neighbourhood, and coming home, quite odd, his mother says—ill-humoured, unsteady on his feet, and husky in his talk. The reverend Athanasius begins to grow very, very grave; they have high words, even, the father and son; and oh! how Harriet and her mother tremble and listen at the study door, when these disputes are going on!

The last term of Tom's under-graduateship arrives; he is in ill health, but he will make a mighty effort to retrieve himself for his degree; and early in the cold winter's morning—late, late at night—he toils over his books: and the end is that, a month before the examinations, Thomas Rook, esquire, has a brain fever, and Mrs. Rook, and Miss Rook, and the Reverend Athanasius Rook, are all lodging at the Hoop, an inn in Cambridge-town, and day and night round the couch of poor Tom.

* * * * *

Oh, sin! woe, repentance! Oh, touching reconciliation and burst of tears on the part of son and father, when one morning at the parsonage, after Tom's recovery, the old gentleman produced a bundle of receipts, and says, with a broken voice, "There, boy, don't be vexed about your debts. Boys will be boys, I know, and I have paid all demands." Every body cries in the house at this news, the mother and daughter most profusely, even Mrs. Stokes, the old housekeeper, who shakes master's hand, and actually kisses Mr. Tom.

Well, Tom begins to read a little for his fellowship, but in vain; he is beaten by Mr. Snick, the Westmoreland man. He has no hopes of living; Lord Bagwig's promises were all moonshine. Tom must go to the bar; and his father, who has long left off taking pupils, must take them again, to support his son in London.

Why tell you what happens when there? Tom lives at the west end of the town, and never goes near the Temple; Tom goes to Ascot and Epsom along with his great friends; Tom has a long bill with Mr. Rymell, another long bill with Mr. Nugge; he gets into the hands of the Jews—and his father rushes up to London on the outside of the coach to find Tom in a spunging house in Cur-sitor Street—the nearest approach he has made to the Temple since his three years' residence in London.

I don't like to tell you the rest of the history. The Reverend Athanasius was not immortal, and he died a year after his visit to the spunging house, leaving his son exactly one farthing, and his wife one hundred pounds a year, with remainder to his daughter. But, Heaven bless you! the poor things would never allow Tom to want while they had plenty, and they sold out and sold out the three thousand pounds until, at the end of three years, there did not remain one single stiver of them; and now Miss Harriet is a governess, with sixty pounds a year, supporting her mother, who lives upon fifty.

As for Tom, he is a regular *leg* now—leading the life already described. When I met him last it was at Baden, where he was on a professional tour, with a carriage, a courier, a valet, a confederate, and a case of pistols. He has been in five duels, he has killed a man who spoke lightly about his honour; and at French or English hazard, at billiards, at whist, at loo, *écarté*, blind hookey, drawing straws, or beggar-my-neighbour, he will cheat you—cheat you for a hundred pounds or for a guinea, and murder you afterwards, if you like.

Abroad, our friend takes military rank, and calls himself Captain Rook; when asked of what service, he says he was with don Carlos or queen Christine; and

certain it is that he was absent for a couple of years nobody knows where; he may have been with General Evans, or he may have been at the Sainte Pelagie in Paris, as some people vow he was.

We must wind up this paper with some remarks concerning poor little Pigeon. Vanity has been little Pigeon's failing through life. He is a linendraper's son, and has been left with money: and the silly fashionable works that he has read, and the silly female relatives that he has—(N. B. All young men with money have silly, flattering she-relatives)—and the silly trips which he has made to watering-places, where he has scraped acquaintance with the honourable 'Tom Mountcoffeehouse, Lord Ballyhooly, the celebrated German Prince, Sweller Mobskau, and their like (all Captain Rooks in their way), have been the ruin of him.

I have not the slightest pity in the world for little Pigeon. Look at him! See in what absurd finery the little prig is dressed. Wine makes his poor little head ache, but he will drink because it is manly. In mortal fear, he puts himself behind a curveting camel-leopard of a cab horse; or perched on the top of a prancing dromedary, is borne through Rotten Row, when he would give the world to be on his sofa, or with his own mamma and sisters, over a quiet pool of commerce and a cup of tea. How riding does scarify his poor little legs; and shakes his poor little sides! Smoking, how it does turn his little stomach inside out! and yet smoke he will: Sweller Mobskau smokes; Mountcoffeehouse don't mind a cigar; and as for Ballyhooly, he will puff you a dozen in a day, and says very truly that Pontet won't supply him with near such good ones as he sells Pigeon. The fact is, that Pontet vowed seven years ago not to give his lordship a sixpence more credit; and so the good-natured nobleman always helps himself out of Pigeon's box.

On the shoulders of these aristocratical individuals, Mr. Pigeon is carried into certain clubs, or perhaps we should say he walks into them, by the aid of these "legs." But they keep him always to themselves. Captains Rooks must rob in company; but of course the greater the profits, the fewer the partners must be. Three are positively requisite, however, as every reader must know who has played a game at whist: number one to be Pigeon's partner, and curse his stars at losing, and propose higher play, and "settle" with number two; number three to transact business with Pigeon, and drive him down to the city to sell out. We have known an instance or two where, after a very good night's work, number three has bolted with the winnings altogether, but the practice is dangerous: not only disgraceful to the profession, but it cuts up your own chance afterwards, as no one will act with you. There is only one occasion on which such a manœuvre is allowable. Many are sick of the profession, and desirous to turn honest men; in this case when you can get a good coup, five thousand say, bolt without scruple. One thing is clear, the other men must be mum, and you can live at Vienna comfortably on the interest of five thousand pounds.

Well then, in the society of these amiable confederates little Pigeon goes through that period of time which is necessary for the purpose of plucking him. To do this, you must not, in most cases, tug at the feathers so as to hurt him, else he may be frightened, and hop away to somebody else: nor, generally speaking, will the feathers come out so easily at first as they will when he is used to it, and then they drop in handfuls. Nor need you have the least scruple in so causing the little creature to moult artificially; if you don't somebody else will: a Pigeon goes into the world fated, as Chateaubriand says—

Pigeon, il va subir le sort de tout pigeon.

He *must* be plucked: it is the purpose for which nature has formed him; if you, Captain Rook, do not perform the operation on a green table lighted by two wax candles, and with two packs of cards to operate with, some other Rook will: are there not rail-roads, and Spanish bonds, and bituminous com-

panies, and Cornish tin mines, and old dowagers with daughters to marry? If you leave him, Rook of Birchin Lane will have him as sure as fate; if Rook of Birchin Lane don't hit him, Rook of the Stock Exchange will blaze away both barrels at him, which, if the poor trembling flutterer escape, he will fly over and drop into the rookery, where dear old swindling Lady Rook and her daughters will find him, and nestle him in their bosoms, and in that soft place pluck him, until he turns out as naked as a cannon ball.

Be not thou scrupulous, O Captain! seize on Pigeon; pluck him gently but boldly; but above all, never let him go. If he is a stout cautious bird, of course you must be more cautious; if he is excessively silly and scared, perhaps the best way is just to take him round the neck at once, and strip the whole stock of plumage from his back.

The feathers of the human pigeon being thus violently abstracted from him, no others supply their place: and yet I do not pity him. He is now only undergoing the destiny of pigeons, and is, I do believe, as happy in his plucked as in his feathery state. He cannot purse out his breast, and bury his head, and fan his tail, and strut in the sun as if he were a turkey-cock. Under all those fine airs and feathers, he was but what he is now, a poor little meek, silly, cowardly bird, and his state of pride is not a whit more natural to him than his fallen condition. He soon grows used to it. He is too great a coward to despair; much too mean to be frightened because he must live by doing meanness. He is sure, if he cannot fly, to fall somehow or other on his little miserable legs: on these he hops about, and manages to live somewhere in his own mean way. He has but a small stomach, and doesn't mind what food he puts into it. He sponges on his relatives; or else, just before his utter ruin, he marries and has nine children (and such a family *always* lives); he turns bully, most likely, takes to drinking, and beats his wife, who supports him or takes to drinking too; or he gets a little place, a very little place: you hear he has some tide-waitership, or is clerk to some new milk company, or is lurking about a newspaper. He dies, and a subscription is raised for the Widow Pigeon, and we look no more to find a likeness of him in his children, who are as a new race. Blessed are ye little ones, for ye are born in poverty, and may bear it, or surmount it, and die rich. But wo to the Pigeons of this earth, for they are born rich that they may die poor.

The end of Captain Rook—for we must bring both him and the paper to an end—is not more agreeable, but somewhat more manly and majestic than the conclusion of Mr. Pigeon. If you walk over to the Queen's Bench Prison, I would lay a wager that a dozen such are to be found there in a moment. They have a kind of lucifer-look with them, and stare at you with fierce, twinkling, crow-footed eyes; or grin from under huge grizzly moustaches, as they walk up and down in their tattered brocades. What a dreadful activity is that of a madhouse, or a prison!—a dreary flagged court-yard, a long dark room, and the inmates of it, like the inmates of the menagerie-cages, ceaselessly walking up and down! Mary Queen of Scots says very touchingly:—

Pour mon mal estrangeur
Je ne m'arreste en place;
Mais, j'en ay beau changer
Si ma douleur n'efface!

Up and down, up and down—the inward woe seems to spur the body onwards: and I think in both madhouse and prison you will find plenty of specimens of our Captain Rook. It is fine to mark him under the pressure of this woe, and see how fierce he looks when stirred up by the long pole of memory. In these asylums, the Rooks end their lives; or, more happy, they die miserably in a miserable provincial town abroad, and for the benefit of coming Rooks they commonly die early: you as seldom hear of an old Rook (practising his trade) as of a rich one. It is a short-lived trade, not merry, for the gains are most precarious, and perpetual doubt and dread are not pleasant accompaniments of

a profession:—not agreeable either, for though Captain Rook does not mind *being* a scoundrel, no man likes to be considered as such, and as such, he knows very well, does the world consider Captain Rook:—not profitable, for the expenses of the trade swallow up all the profits of it, and in addition leave the bankrupt with certain habits that have become as nature to him, and which, to live, he must gratify. I know no more miserable wretch than our Rook in his autumn days, at dismal Calais or Boulogne, or at the Bench yonder, with a whole load of diseases and wants, that have come to him in the course of his profession; the diseases and wants of sensuality, always pampered, and now agonizing for lack of its unnatural food; the mind, which *must* think now, and has only bitter recollections, mortified ambitions, and unavailing scoundrelisms to con over! Oh, Captain Rook! what nice “chums” do you take with you into prison; what pleasant companions of exile follow you over the *fines patriæ*, or attend, the only watchers, round your miserable deathbed!

My son, be not a Pigeon in thy dealings with the world:—but it is better to be a Pigeon than a Rook.

THE FASHIONABLE AUTHORESS.

BY WILLIAM TRACKERAY.

PAYING a visit the other day to my friend Timson, who, I need not tell the public, is editor of that famous evening paper, the * (and let it be said that there is no more profitable acquaintance than a gentleman in Timson's situation, in whose office, at three o'clock daily, you are sure to find new books, lunch, magazines, and innumerable tickets for concerts and plays); going, I say, into Timson's office, I saw on the table an immense paper cone or funnel, containing a bouquet of such a size that it might be called a bosquet, wherein all sorts of rare geraniums, luscious magnolias, stately dahlias, and other floral produce were gathered together—a regular flower-stack.

Timson was for a brief space invisible, and I was left alone in the room with the odours of this tremendous bow-pot, which filled the whole of the ink, smutty, dingy, apartment with an agreeable incense. “*O rus! quando te aspiciam,*” exclaimed I, out of the Latin grammar, for imagination had carried me away to the country, and was about to make another excellent and useful quotation (from the 14th book of the Iliad, Madam.) concerning “ruddy lotuses; and crocuses, and hyacinths,” when all of a sudden Timson appeared. His head and shoulders had, in fact, been engulfed in the flowers, among which he might be compared to any Cupid, butterfly, or bee. His little face was screwed up into such an expression of comical delight and triumph, that a Methodist parson would have laughed at it in the midst of a funeral sermon.

“What are you giggling at!” said Mr. Timson, assuming a high aristocratic air.

“Has the goddess Flora made you a present of that bower wrapped up in white paper, or did it come by the vulgar hands of yonder gorgeous footman, at whom all the little printer's devils are staring in the passage?”

“Stuff,” said Timson, picking to pieces some rare exotic, worth at the very least fifteen-pence; “a friend, who knows that Mrs. Timson and I are fond of these things, has sent us a nosegay; that's all.

I saw how it was. “Augustus Timson,” exclaimed I, sternly; “the Pimlico has been with you; if that footman did not wear the Pimlico plush, ring the bell and order me out; if that three-cornered billet lying in your snuff-box has not the Pimlico seal to it, never ask me to dinner again.”

"Well, if it *does*," says Mr. Timson, who flushed as red as a peony, "what is the harm? Lady Fanny Flummery may send flowers to her friends, I suppose? The conservatories at Pimlico House are famous all the world over, and the countess promised me a nosegay the very last time I dined there."

"Was that the day when she gave a box of bonbons for your darling little Ferdinand?"

"No, another day."

"Or the day when she promised you her carriage for Epsom races?"

"No."

"Or the day when she hoped that her Lucy and your Barbara-Jane might be acquainted, and sent to the latter from the former a new French doll and tea-things?"

"Fiddlestick!" roared out Augustus Timson, Esquire; "I wish you wouldn't come bothering here. I tell you that Lady Pimlico is my friend—my friend, mark you, and I will allow no man to abuse her in my presence: I say again *no rom*;" wherewith Mr. Timson plunged both his hands violently into his breeches-pockets, looked me in the face sternly, and began jingling his keys and shillings about.

At this conjuncture (it being about half-past three o'clock in the afternoon), a one-horse-chay drove up to the * office (Timson lives at Clapham, and comes in and out in this machine)—a one-horse-chay drove up; and amidst a scuffling and crying of small voices, good-homoured Mrs. Timson bounced into the room.

"Here we are, deary," said she: "we'll walk to the Meryweathers; and I've told Sam to be in Charles Street at twelve with the chaise: it would'nt do, you know, to come out of the Pimlico box, and have the people cry, 'Mrs. Timson's carriage!' for old Sam and the chaise."

Timson, to this loving and voluble address of his lady, gave a peevish puzzled look towards the stranger, as much as to say "*He's* here."

"La, Mr. Smith! and how *do* you do?—So rude—I did n't see you: but the fact is, we are all in *such* a bustle! Augustus has got Lady Pimlico's box for the *Puritani* to-night, and I vowed I'd take the children."

Those young persons were evidently, from their costume, prepared for some extraordinary festival. Miss Barbara-Jane, a young lady of six years old, in a pretty pink slip and white muslin, her dear little poll bristling over with papers, to be removed previous to the play; while Master Ferdinand had a pair of nan-keens (I can recollect Timson in them in the year 1825—a great buck), and white silk stockings, which belonged to his mamma. His frill was very large and very clean, and he was fumbling perpetually at a pair of white kid gloves, which his mamma forbade him to assume before the opera.

And "Look here!" and "Oh, precious!" and "Oh, my!" were uttered by these worthy people, as they severally beheld the vast bouquet, into which Mrs. Timson's head flounced, just as her husband's had done before.

"I must have a green-house at the Snuggery, that's positive, Timson, for I'm passionately fond of flowers—and how kind of Lady Fanny!—Do you know her ladyship, Mr. Smith?"

"Indeed, madam, I don't remember having ever spoken to a lord or a lady in my life."

Timson smiled in a supercilious way. Mrs. Timson exclaimed, "La, how odd! Augustus knows ever so many. Let's see, there's the Countess of Pimlico and Lady Fanny Flummery; Lord Doldrum (Timson touched up his travels, you know); Lord Gasterton, Lord Guttlebury's eldest son; Lady Paw-paw (they say she ought not to be visited, though); Baron Strum—Strom—Strumpf—"

What the baron's name was I have never been able to learn; for here Timson burst out with a "Hold your tongue, Bessy," which stopped honest Mrs. Timson's harmless prattle altogether, and obliged that worthy woman to say meekly, "Well, Gu, I did not think there was any harm in mentioning your

acquaintance." Good soul! it was only because she took pride in her Timson that she loved to enumerate the great names of the persons who did him honour. My friend the editor was, in fact, in a cruel position, looking foolish before his old acquaintance, stricken in that unfortunate sore point in his honest, good-humoured character. 'The man adored the aristocracy, and had that wonderful respect for a lord which, perhaps, the observant reader may have remarked, especially characterizes men of Timson's way of thinking.

In old days at the club (we held it in a small public house near the Coburg Theatre, some of us having free admissions to that place of amusement, and some of us living for convenience in the immediate neighbourhood of one of his majesty's prisons in that quarter.—in old days, I say, at our spouting and toasted cheese club, called "The Forum," Timson was called Brutus Timson, and not Augustus, in consequence of the ferocious republicanism which characterized him, and his utter scorn and hatred of a bloated, do-nothing aristocracy. His letters in "The Weekly Sentinel," signed "Lictor," must be remembered by all our readers: he advocated the repeal of the corn laws, the burning of machines, the rights of labour, &c. &c., wrote some pretty defences of Robespierre, and used seriously to avow, when at all in liquor, that, in consequence of those "Lictor" letters, Lord Castlereagh had tried to have him murdered, and thrown over Blackfriar's Bridge.

By what means Augustus Timson rose to his present exalted position it is needless here to state; suffice it, that in two years he was completely bound over neck-and-heels to the bloodthirsty aristocrats, hereditary tyrants, &c. One evening he was asked to dine with the secretary of the Treasury (the * is ministerial, and has been so these forty-nine years); at the house of that secretary of the Treasury he met a lord's son: walking with Mrs. Timson in the park next Sunday that lord's son saluted him. Timson was from that moment a slave, had his coats made at the west end, cut his wife's relations (they are dealers in marine stores, and live at Wapping), and had his name put down at two clubs.

Who was the lord's son? Lord Pimlico's son, to be sure, the honourable Frederick Flummery, who married Lady Fanny Foxy, daughter of Pitt Castlereagh, second earl of Reynard, Kilbrush Castle, county Kildare. 'The earl had been ambassador in '14; Mr. Flummery, his attaché: he was twenty-one at that time, with the sweetest tufts on his chin in the world. Lady Fanny was only four-and-twenty, just jilted by Prince Scoronconcolo, the horrid man who had married Miss Solomonson with a plum. Fanny had nothing—Frederick had about seven thousand pounds less. What better could the young things do than marry? Marry they did, and in the most delicious secrecy. Old Reynard was charmed to have an opportunity of breaking with one of his daughters for ever, and only longed for an occasion never to forgive the other nine.

A wit of the Prince's time, who inherited and transmitted to his children a vast fortune in genius, was cautioned on his marriage to be very economical. "Economical!" said he; "my wife has nothing, and I have nothing: I suppose a man can't live under *that*!" Our interesting pair, by judiciously employing the same capital, managed, year after year, to live very comfortably, until, at last they were received into Pimlico House by the dowager (who has it for her life), where they live very magnificently. Lady Fanny gives the most magnificent entertainments in London, has the most magnificent equipage, and a very fine husband; who has his equipage as fine as her ladyship's; his seat in the omnibus, while her ladyship is in the second tier. They say he plays a good deal—ay, and pays, too, when he loses.

And how, pr'ythee? Her ladyship is a FASHIONABLE AUTHORESS. She has been at this game for fifteen years: during which period she has published forty-five novels, edited twenty-seven new magazines and I don't know how many annuals, besides publishing poems, plays, desultory thoughts, memoirs, recollections of travel, and pamphlets without number. Going one day to church, a

lady, whom I knew by her Leghorn bonnet and red ribbons, *ruche* with poppies and marigolds, brass ferronière, great red hands, black silk gown, thick shoes, and black silk stockings; a lady, whom I knew, I say, to be a devotional cook, made a bob to me just as the psalm struck up, and offered me a share of her hymn-book. It was,

HEAVENLY CHORDS;

A COLLECTION OF

SACRED SERAINS:

SELECTED, COMPOSED, AND EDITED, BY THE
LADY FRANCES JULIANA FLUMMERY.

—being simply a collection of heavenly chords robbed from the lyres of Watts, Wesley, Brady, and Tate, &c.; and of sacred strains from the rare collection of Sternhold and Hopkins. Out of this, cook and I sang; and it is amazing how much our fervour was increased by thinking that our devotions were directed by a lady whose name was in the Red Book.

The thousands of pages that Lady Flummery has covered with ink exceed all belief. You must have remarked, madam, in respect of this literary fecundity, that your amiable sex possesses vastly greater capabilities than we do; and that while a man is lying painfully labouring over a letter of two sides, a lady will produce a dozen pages, crossed, dashed, and so beautifully neat and close, as to be well-nigh invisible. The readiest of ready pens has Lady Flummery; her Pegasus gallops over hotpressed satin so as to distance all gentlemen riders: like Camilla, it scours the plain—of Bath, and never seems punished or fatigued; only it runs so fast that it often leaves all sense behind it; and there it goes on, on, scribble, scribble, scribble, never flagging until it arrives at that fair winning post on which is written “FINIS,” or, “THE END;” and shows that the course, whether it be of novel, annual, poem, or what not, is complete.

Now, the author of these pages doth not pretend to describe the inward thoughts, ways, and manner of being, of my lady Flummery, having made before that humiliating confession, that lords and ladies are personally unknown to him; so that all milliners, butchers’ ladies, dashing young clerks, and apprentices, or other persons who are anxious to cultivate a knowledge of the aristocracy, had better skip over this article altogether. But he hath heard it whispered, from pretty good authority, that the manners and customs of those men and women resemble, in no inconsiderable degree, the habits and usages of other men and women whose names are unrecorded by Debet. Granting this, and that Lady Flummery is a woman pretty much like another, the philosophical reader will be content that we rather consider her ladyship in her public capacity, and examine her influence upon mankind in general.

Her person, then, being thus put out of the way, her works, too, need not be very carefully sifted and criticised; for what is the use of peering into a millstone, or making calculations about the figure 0? The woman has not, in fact, the slightest influence upon literature for good or for evil: there are a certain number of fools whom she catches in her flimsy traps; and why not? They are made to be humbugged, or how should we live? Lady Flummery writes every thing: that is, nothing. Her poetry is mere wind; her novels, stark naught; her philosophy, sheer vacancy; how should she do any better than she does? how could she succeed if she *did* do any better? If she did write well, she would not be Lady Flummery; she would not be praised by Timson and the critics, because she would be an honest woman, and not bribe them. Nay, she would probably be written down by Timson and Co., because, being an honest woman, she utterly despised them and their craft.

We have said what she writes for the most part. Individually, she will throw off any number of novels that Messrs. Soap and Diddle will pay for; and collectively, by the aid of self and friends, scores of “Lyrics of Loveliness,” “Beams of Beauty,” “Pearls of Purity,” &c. Who does not recollect the

success which her "Pearls of the Peerage" had? She is going to do the "Beauties of the Baronage;" then we shall have the "Daughters of the Dustmen," or some such other collection of portraits. Lady Flummery has around her a score of literary gentlemen, who are bound to her, body and soul; give them a dinner, a smile from an opera-box, a wave of the hand in Rotten Row, and they are hers, neck and heels. *Vides, mi fili, &c.* See, my son, with what a very small dose of humbug men are to be bought. I know many of these individuals; there is my friend M'Lather, an immense, pudgy man; I saw him one day walking through Bond Street in company with an enormous ruby breast-pin. "Mac!" shouted your humble servant, "that is a Flummery ruby;" and Mac hated and cursed us ever after. Presently came little Fitch, the artist; he was rigged out in an illuminated velvet waistcoat—Flummery again—"there's only one like it in town," whispered Fitch to me confidentially, "and Flummery has that." To be sure, Fitch had given, in return, half-a-dozen of the prettiest drawings in the world. "I wouldn't charge for them, you know," he says, "for hang it, Lady Flummery is my friend." Oh Fitch, Fitch!

Fifty more instances could be adduced of her ladyship's ways of bribery. She bribes the critics to praise her, and the writers to write for her; and the public flocks to her as it will to any other tradesman who is properly puffed. Out comes the book; as for its merits, we may allow, cheerfully, that Lady Flummery has no lack of that natural *esprit* which every woman possesses; but here praise stops. For the style, she does not know her own language, but in revenge, has a smattering of half-a-dozen others. She interlards her works with fearful quotations from the French, fiddle-faddle extracts from Italian operas, German phrases fiercely mutilated, and a scrap or two of bad Spanish; and, upon the strength of these murders, she calls herself an authoress. To be sure there is no such word as authoress. If any young nobleman or gentleman of Eton College, when called upon to indite a copy of verses in praise of Sappho, or the Countess of Dash, or Lady Charlotte What-d'ye-call-em, or the Honourable Mrs. Somebody, should fondly imagine that he might apply to those fair creatures the title of *auctrix*—I pity that young nobleman's or gentleman's case. Dr. Wordsworth and assistants would wish that error out of him in a way that need not here be mentioned. Remember it henceforth, ye writeresses—there is no such word as authoress. *Auctor*, madam, is the word. "*Optima, tu proprii nominis auctor eris;*" which, of course, means that you are, by your proper name, an author, not an authoress: the line is in Ainsworth's Dictionary, where anybody may see it.

This point is settled then, there is no such word as authoress. But what of that? Are authoresses to be bound by the rules of grammar? The supposition is absurd. We don't expect them to know their own language: we prefer rather the little graceful pranks and liberties they take with it. When, for instance, a celebrated authoress, who wrote a *Diaress*, calls somebody the prototype of his own father, we feel an obligation to her ladyship: the language feels an obligation; it has a charm and a privilege with which it was never before endowed: and it is manifest, that if we can call ourselves antetypes of our grandmothers—can prophesy what we had for dinner yesterday, and so on, we get into a new range of thought, and discover new regions of fancy and poetry, of which the mind hath never even had a notion until now.

It may be then considered as certain that an authoress *ought* not to know her own tongue. Literature and politics have this privilege in common, that any ignoramus may excel in both. No apprenticeship is required, that is certain; and if any gentleman doubts, let us refer him to the popular works of the present day, where, if he finds a particle of scholarship, or any acquaintance with any books in any language, or if he be disgusted by any absurd, stiff, old-fashioned notions of grammatical propriety, we are ready to send him back his subscription. A friend of ours came to us the other day in great trouble. His dear little boy, who had been for some months attaché to the stables of Mr. Til-

bury's establishment, took a fancy to the corduroy-breeches of some other gentleman employed in the same emporium—appropriated them, and afterwards disposed of them for a trifling sum to a relation—I believe his uncle. For this harmless freak, poor Sam was absolutely seized, tried at Clerkenwell Sessions, and condemned to six months' useless rotatory labour at the House of Correction. "The poor fellow was bad enough before, sir," said his father, confiding in our philanthropy; "he picked up such a deal of slang among the stable-boys: but if you could hear him since he came from the mill! he knocks you down with it, sir. I am afraid, sir, of his becoming a regular prig; for though he's a cute chap, can read and write, and is mighty smart and handy, yet no one will take him into service on account of that business of the breeches!"

"What, sir!" exclaimed we, amazed at the man's simplicity; "*such* a son, and you don't know what to do with him! a cute fellow, who can write, who had been educated in a stable-yard, and has had six months' polish in a university—I mean a prison—and you don't know what to do with him? Make a *fashionable novelist* of him, and be hanged to you!" And proud am I to say that that young man, every evening, after he comes home from his work (he has taken to street-sweeping in the day, and I don't advise him to relinquish a certainty)—prond am I to say that he devotes every evening to literary composition, and is coming out with a novel, in numbers, of the most fashionable kind.

This little episode is only given for the sake of example; *par exemple*, as our authoress would say, who delights in French of the very worst kind. The public likes only the extremes of society, and votes mediocrity vulgar. From the Author they will take nothing but Fleet Ditch: from the Authoress, only the very finest of rose-water. I have read so many of her ladyship's novels, that, egad! now I don't care for any thing under a marquis. Why the deuce should we listen to the intrigues, the misfortunes, the virtues, and conversations of a couple of countesses, for instance, when we can have duchesses for our money! What's a baronet? pish! pish! that great coarse red fist in his scutcheon turns me sick! What's a baron? a fellow with only one more ball than a pawnbroker; and, upon my conscience, just as common. Dear Lady Flummery, in your next novel, give us no more of these low people; nothing under strawberry leaves, for the mercy of Heaven! Suppose, now, you write us

ALBERT;

OR,

WHISPERINGS AT WINDSOR.

BY THE LADY FRANCES FLUMMERY.

There is a subject—fashionable circles, curious revelations, exclusive excitement, &c. To be sure, you *must* here introduce a viscount, and that is sadly vulgar; but we will pass him for the sake of the ministerial *portefeuille*, which is genteel. Then you might do "Leopold; or, the Bride of Neuilly;" "The Victim of Wurtemberg;" "Olga; or, the Autocrat's Daughter" (a capital title); "*Henri*; or, Rome in the Nineteenth Century:" we can fancy the book, and a sweet paragraph about it in Timson's paper.

"HENRI, by Lady Frances Flummery.—Henri! who can he be? a little bird whispers in our ear, that the gifted and talented Sappho of our hemisphere has discovered some curious particulars in the life of a *certain young chevalier*, whose appearance at Rome has so frightened the court of the Tuileries. Henri de B-rd-ux is of an age when the *young god* can shoot his darts into the bosom with fatal accuracy; and if the Marchesini Degli Spinachi (whose portrait our lovely authoress has sung with a *kindred hand*) be as beauteous as she is represented (and as all who have visited in the exclusive circles of the eternal city say she is), no wonder at her effect upon the Prince. *Verbum sep.* We hear

that a few copies are still remaining. The enterprising publishers, Messrs. Soap and Diddle, have announced, we see, several other works by the same accomplished pen."

This paragraph makes its appearance, in small type, in the *, by the side, perhaps, of a disinterested recommendation of bear's grease, or some remarks on the extraordinary cheapness of plate in Cornhill. Well, two or three days after, my dear Timson, who had been asked to dinner, writes, in his own hand, and causes to be printed in the largest type, an article to the following effect:—

"HENRI.

BY LADY F. FLUMMERY.

"This is another of the graceful evergreens which the fair fingers of Lady Fanny Flummery are continually strewing upon our path. At once profound and caustic, truthful and passionate, we are at a loss whether most to admire the manly grandeur of her ladyship's mind, or the exquisite nymph-like delicacy of it.—Strange power of fancy! Sweet enchantress, that rules the mind at will: stirring up the utmost depths of it into passion and storm, or wreathing and dimpling its calm surface with countless summer smiles (as a great bard of Old Time has expressed it); what do we not owe to woman?

"What do we not owe her? More love, more happiness, more calm of vexed spirit, more truthful aid, and pleasant counsel; in joy more delicate sympathy; in sorrow, more kind companionship. We look into her cheery eyes, and in those wells of love, care drowns: we listen to her syren voice, and, in that balmy music, banished hopes come winging to the breast again."

This goes on for about three-quarters of a column: I don't pretend to understand it; but with flowers, angels, Wordsworth's poems, and the old dramatists, one can never be wrong. I think; and though I have written the above paragraphs myself, and don't understand a word of them, I can't upon my conscience, help thinking that they are mighty pretty writing. After, then, that this has gone on for about three-quarters of a column (Timson does it in spare minutes, and fits it to any book that Lady Fanny brings out), he proceeds to particularize, thus:—

"The griding excitement which thrills through every fibre of the soul as we peruse these passionate pages, is almost too painful to bear. Nevertheless, one drains the draughts of poesy to the dregs, so deliciously intoxicating is its nature. We defy any man who begins these volumes to quit them ere he has perused each line. The plot may be briefly told as thus: Henri, an exiled prince of Franeonia (it is easy to understand the flimsy allegory), arrives at Rome, and is presented to the sovereign pontiff. At a feast, given in his honour at the Vatican, a dancing girl (the loveliest creation that ever issued from poet's brain) is introduced, and exhibits some specimens of her art. The young prince is instantaneously smitten with the charms of the Saltatrice; he breathes into her ear the accents of his love, and is listened to with favour. He has, however, a rival, and a powerful one. The Pope has already cast his eye upon the Apulian maid, and burns with lawless passion. One of the grandest scenes ever writ occurs between the rivals. The Pope offers to Castanetta every temptation; he will even resign his crown, and marry her: but she refuses. The prince can make no such offers; he cannot wed her: 'The blood of Borne,' he says, 'may not be thus misallied. He determines to avoid her. In despair, she throws herself off the Tarpeian rock; and the Pope becomes a maniac. Such is an outline of this tragic tale.

"Besides this fabulous and melancholy part of the narrative, which is unsurpassed, much is written in the gay and sparkling style, for which our lovely author is unrivalled. The sketch of the Marchesina Degli Spinachi and her lover, the Duca of Di Gammoni, is delicious; and the intrigue between the beautiful Princess Kalbsbraten and Count Bouterbrod is exquisitely painted:

every body, of course, knows who these characters are. The discovery of the manner in which Kartoffeln, the Saxon envoy, poisons the princess's dishes, is only a graceful and real repetition of a story which was agitated throughout all the diplomatic circles last year. 'Schinken, the Westphalian,' must not be forgotten; nor 'Olla, the Spanish Spy.' How does Lady Fanny Flummery, poet as she is, possess a sense of the ridiculous and a keenness of perception which would do honour to a Rabelais or a Rochefoucault? To those who ask this question, we have one reply, and that an example:—Not among women, 'tis true; for till the Lady Fanny came among us, women never soared so high. Not among women, indeed!—but, in comparing her to that great spirit for whom our veneration is highest and holiest, we offer no dishonour to his shrine:—in saying that he who wrote of *Romeo* and *Desdemona* might have drawn Castanetta and Enrico, we utter but the truthful expressions of our hearts; in asserting that so long as SHAKESPEARE lives, so long will FLUMMERY endure; in declaring that he who rules in all hearts, and over all spirits and all climes, has found a congenial spirit, we do but justice to Lady Fanny—justice to him who sleeps by Avon!"

With which we had better, perhaps, conclude. Our object has been, in descanting upon the Fashionable Authoress, to point out the influence which her writing possesses over society, rather than to criticise of her life. The former is quite harmless; and we don't pretend to be curious about the latter. The woman herself is not so blameable; it is the silly people who cringe at her feet that do the mischief, and, gulled themselves, gull the most gullible of publics. Think you, O Timson! that her ladyship asks you for your *beaux yeux* or your wit? Fool! do you think so, or try and think so; and yet you know she loves not you, but the "newspaper. Think, little Fitch, in your fine waistcoat, how dearly you have paid for it! Think, M'Lather, how many smirks, and lies, and columns of good three-halfpence-a-line matter, that big garnet pin has cost you! The woman laughs at you, man! you, who fancy that she is smitten with you—laughs at your absurd pretensions, your way of eating flesh at dinner, your great hands, your eyes, your whiskers, your coat, and your strange north-country twang. Down with this Dalilah! Avaunt, O Circe! giver of poisonous seeds! To your natural haunts, ye gentlemen of the press! if bachelors, frequent your taverns, and be content. Better is Sally the waiter, and the first cut out of the joint, than a dinner of four courses, and humbug therewith. Ye who are married, go to your homes; dine not with those persons who scorn your wives. Go not forth to parties, that you may act Tom Fool for the amusement of my lord and my lady; but play your natural follies among your natural friends. Do this for a few years, and the Fashionable Authoress is extinct. O Jove, what a prospect! She, too, has retreated to her own natural calling, being as much out of place in a book as you, my dear M'Lather, in a drawing-room. Let milliners look up to her; let Howell and James swear by her; let simpering dandies caper about her car; let her write poetry if she likes, but only for the most exclusive circles; let mantua-makers puff her—but not men: let such things be, and the Fashionable Authoress is no more! Blessed, blessed thought! No more fiddle-faddle novels! no more namby-pamby poetry! no more fribble "Blossoms of Loveliness!" When will you arrive, O happy Golden Age?

THE YOUNG LORD.

BY DOUGLAS JERROLD.

"WHEN a sow farrows," writes Henry Lord Brougham, in his "Dissertations," illustrative of Paley, "each pig"—by the action of the abdominal muscles, being literally thrown upon the world—"instantly runs up to one of the teats, which he ever after regards as his own peculiar property." So far, so well, with the first-born pigs; for his lordship continues:—"When more pigs than teats are produced, the latter ones run to the tail of some of the others, and suck till they die of inanition."*

Never before were the advantages and injuries of primogeniture more strikingly, and withal, more affectingly, displayed. Who could have believed that a parallel was to be drawn between peers and pigs? And yet the Chinese, a philosophic, far-seeing people, must have had some inkling of the curious fact; for, in their harmonious and mysterious tongue, "the word '*shu*,'" says Dr. Mason Good, "means both a *lord* and a *swine*." It is, however, but just to add, that this irreverence of synonym is purely the fault of the Chinese radicals; although, in the whole Celestial language, they "do not exceed four hundred and eleven."

The reader, after the authority we have cited, must admit that pigs are of two kinds: pigs born to teats, and pigs born to tails!

(Let us not be mistaken: far be it from us to mingle in an unseemly crowd sucking pigs with sucking peers. We hope to be understood as speaking philosophically, and not profanely.)

Young lords, like young porkers, are of two kinds: lords born to teats and lords born to tails. Here, however (and for the sake of our common humanity it is great happiness to know it), the parallel ends. Lords, though the twentieth of the same house, do not die of inanition; for though aristocracy has but one teat, the state has many most nutritious tails. The first-born tugs all his life at the family breast; the younger Lords Charleses and Lords Augustuses have, time out of mind, been wet-nursed at the Treasury. When the inhuman mother has refused the bounty of a bosom, a Walpole has benignly given the fatness of a tail. The state, with Lady Macbeth, may cry,

"—I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the lord that milks me!"

And the world has borne testimony to the plumpness of the nursling, to the fulness of its cheeks, the brawn of its thighs, and the loudness of its crying. History has shown the state to be a most kind wet-nurse to deserted noble babes; so kind, that, considering them in the maturity of their powers, it is sometimes difficult to decide who have been most fortunate—the lords of the family teat, or the lords of the Treasury tail.

However, we live in eventful times, in days of daring change, of most profane revolution. The young lord of the nineteenth century is a much less enviable person than the Young Lord of fifty years ago. If he be the first-born, with all the advantages of that happy state, the task set him by the hard and grudging spirit of the age is far more irksome, far more difficult, than that conned by his grandfather. His title as a title has not the weight it had; it has lost, too, something of the music of its ring upon the leathern ears of a utilitarian generation. Hard times for Young Lords, when they may not leisurely saunter along the path of worldly honour, lest their heels be wounded by the advancing toes of the viler orders!

Time was when the lord exalted genius: when the poet was a literary serf,

* See "Dissertations on Subjects of Science," vol. i., p. 208.

and wore the collar of the nobleman. The bard of high fancies, noble aspirations, was protected by the rank of nobility, and the bay, it was thought, could only flourish near the strawberry leaves. The poet had succeeded the household jester, and was considered the especial property of the patron. His lordship's name was to be held a potent and wondrous idol in the dedication page of the bard, who was to kneel, and duck beneath, and to utter a strange jargon of idolatry and self-abasement. The poet was to clasp his hands in worship of the rewarding genius, and his lips, touched with Apollo's fire, were to kiss the dust from the shoe-leather of his literary life-giver. The sacrifices paid to the Ape with the Golden Tooth are harmless ceremonies to the offerings of genius rendered, within the last hundred years, to the patron-lord. Genius, however, no longer wears the livery of the nominally great, and the lord, the mere lord, has lost his hymning bondsman.

The Young Lord of the present time (we mean, the fortunate first-born), stripped as he is of many of the sweet prerogatives of a former age, has still a deal of good provided for him by the gods. Though his title has not the same music, the like note of terror in its sound, that by turns delighted and awe-struck the vassals of other days, there are still broad lands, waving forests, inexhaustable mines, all in perspective his. Though he may have the ears of Midas, still he shall have his wealth; and if he may not, like his ancestors, hang at his own sweet will, an offending self at the hall-door, it is still a part of his birth-right to make gins to catch the wicked. In this day, however, to be anything he must be something more than a lord; if not, his title is but a glittering extinguisher of the man.

Come we now to the younger brother—the Young Lord, still more hardly treated by the unjust prejudices of the present hard dealing generation. He may, indeed, eschewing a stern, laborious ambition that promises the reward of the student and the statesman, surrender himself to the blandishments of the race-course, and now-and-then give his system a fillip with the ancient, time-honoured sport of cock-fighting. If he be no longer by his station the exclusive patron of literature, he may take under his worshipful protection a wonderful rat-killing terrier:—still, there is something in his name that sheds lustre on a badger-bait, and gives no small importance to a hopping-match. Small clubs still woo him as a grace and ornament, and very small men are, in their own esteem, made considerably bigger by his acquaintance. The lord, as a lord, is still a man of topping height among dwarfs; still an oracle to the witless and the dumb. He has been known, in the fulness of his condescension, to drive stage coaches; and, keeping up the drollery of the disguise, has touched his hat to the passengers, thankfully receiving half-crowns, shillings, and sixpences.

The Young Lord may, at times, with nothing else to dispose of—with neither talents for public trust, nor industry nor habits for private dealing—take his title to market, and with it turn a profitable penny. Eastward of Temple Bar, there still are bidders. Although the prosaic spirit of the times has considerably affected the sale of Young Lords amongst the daughters of the counting-house, a title, even if it be not recommended by the most seductive manners, the handsomest figure, and the whitest teeth, finds purchasers in the oriental districts. Like Mrs. Peachem's coloured handkerchiefs, the Young Lord may go off at Redriff. He may take this credit to himself; that he has ennobled Barbara Wiggins, the youngest daughter of Ralph Wiggins, tallow-chandler; that he was introduced to the court, and to all the court's great glories, Miss Moidore, the heiress of old Moidore, money-lender and contractor.

Westward, the Young Lord is a dangerous person, to be especially watched by prudent mothers. He is, indeed, of the same family with his elder brother; has admittance to the self-same circle; is, probably the handsomest of the stock; and therefore, being a younger brother, a person to be more vigilantly considered. The Young Lord moves among fashionable heiresses to the liveliest distress of their disinterested natural guardians: his station gives him

every opportunity of rendering himself the most delightful of men to the susceptible young, whilst the poverty of his fortunes makes him detestable to the reflecting old. His very look has in it an invitation to elope; he cannot whisper, that he does not put the fatal question. These are the fears of the lynx-eyed mother, who very properly descants on the profligacy of the younger brother, of his habits of play, his debts, his horrible *liaisons*, his wickedness in general; forgetting not to cast all his faults into deeper shadow by contrasting them with the manifold virtues and very many gentlemanly qualities possessed by his dear, his excellent relation, the family heir.

There is, however, an easy road to distinction for the Young Lord: he has still within his reach the means of notoriety, with the further gratification of proving to the scoffing vulgar that he is, even in these days, privileged in his enjoyments; that his ebullitions of a warm temperament are more considerably judged than the vagaries of common folks; and that when called to account for his buoyant eccentricity, he is "used all gently," and, on the part of his censors, with due allowance of his social standing. The Young Lord despoils many doors of their knockers, and there is a whim, a novelty in the achievement which makes it "light to Cassio." He breaks a few lamps, and is fined forty shillings; he pays the money with the fortitude of a martyr, and, with a smile, asks his judge if that is all the damage. The judge nods assent: forty shillings from the purse of our Young Lord being, in the punishment inflicted upon him by such a mulct, equal to two months' imprisonment to a poorer wag, with the trifling supplement of hard labour. Thus it is; unless a man have a Young Lord for his acquaintance, and can use a crowbar or fling a stone under the patronage of the aristocracy, he must pay most disproportionately for the recreation. This is obviously wrong, and, in our humble opinion, quite in opposition to the meaning of the excellent King John when, one fine day, he signed and sealed at Runnymede.

The Young Lord is sometimes the centre of an admiring circle; the patron of a knot of eccentric spirits, living on the hem of society, who are yet convinced that the light of the fashionable world is reflected upon them from the countenance of their noble "friend." Under his auspices, in his name, they assemble at a pot-house which, dignified by such a gathering, becomes a tavern: and with true devotion, eat and drink their fealty to the Lord of Broken Panes. He sets the fashion of commonplace debauchery, and has a thousand followers; clerks, shopmen, and apprentices, in humble imitation of their great original model,

"Break the lamps, beat watchmen,
Then stagger to some punk."

The Young Lord, by his own sufferings, makes a watch-house a place of sport for humbler revellers; and fined for being drunk, by the chivalrous air with which he flings down five shillings, recommends intoxication as the best of all possible frailties to his worshipful admirers. To beard a magistrate is to show fine blood; to damn the newspapers, and all their daily histories, high moral valour. Thus the Young Lord has still some influence on social life—still makes his impress on a plastic generation.

We live, however, in times unpropitious to the successful development of romance. Every day the distance between the noble brawler and the plebeian blackguard is lessened, and we know not how soon the Young Lord may, in public opinion, toe the same line with the young cobbler; that is, when both engaged in the same midnight mirth, when both animated by the same dignified purpose. This is a hard truth for the *Pullus Jovis* of the nineteenth century, who may accuse his stars that he fell not on a more feudal age; that, coming late into this revolutionary world, he must even submit to an ordeal unknown to his grandfathers. But so it is. Public opinion is the terrible Inquisition of modern times; and those who, in a former age, were by their birth and office held the elect and chosen, are unceremoniously dragged forth, questioned, and doomed to an *auto da fé*. We have fallen upon bitter days.

It is next to be considered (policy, humanity presses upon us the necessity of grave cogitation) what is to be done with Young Lords—with those who in a happier time would have been born not to their fathers and mothers, but to the people; with those who, deprived of a nest at home, would have been put out to wet-nurse on the nation. There was a time when the public treasury had many tails; but alas! alas! murderous innovation, with a heart of flint, has cut them off one by one, and already are others marked and doomed for excision.

What shall become of the younger branches of the aristocracy, since they may no longer, to any number, be planted in the garden of the Hesperides, laid out and tended at the public cost?

The Young Lord (be it still remembered, that we speak of second sons, and so downwards) looks around him in this hard, grudging nineteenth century; surveys every yard of once merry England, and, to him, yearning for the sweet fruits of former days, finds the land barren!

The Young Lord peeps into the church. Alas! though a few good stalls still remain, the struggle to get into one of them is made fierce by many candidates. And then, the sweet green nooks, the rich pasturages, the many pleasant places, consecrated for an age to the uses of the sons of orthodoxy, are, in a measure, thrown open, impoverished, made desolate, compared to the exclusiveness and plenty of the good old religious times. There are still, it must be confessed, many delicious corners, a thousand savoury morsels for the occupancy and palates of the sons of the church; but alas! the crowd elbowing for the worldly paradise,—the host, with open mouths, gaping for the food! The Young Lord can no longer lounge into the very *penetratia* of the costly edifice; its manna is not to be had for the mere gathering; he is hustled by a mob of lords as good as he; and hands as white and gentle as his own, claw and scramble for the blessed aliment.

The Young Lord would try his fortunes on the deep. Again, the spirit of the times levels him almost to the common. There was a day when epaulettes were to be had for votes; and the "aye" of the papa would bring down decorative honour on the shoulder of the son; when gray heads were common among plebeian midshipmen; as common as downy chins among lieutenants and commanders; when, lucky was the child whose father was one of the twenty freeholders, for his merits, made known to the minister, would be exalted. Such days are dead and gone: the Young Lord looks into the gun-room and the cock-pit, and in those chosen spots, where, in former times, one Young Lord sufficed to shed a grace and dignity—there are lords by the half-dozen. Unless more ships are built for Young Lords, they must even tarry in the shade; must be still commanded, when they would fain command.

The Young Lord, disappointed in the church, disgusted with the fleet, looks towards the army. Peace, however, inglorious peace, throngs the service with gentle spirits of his order; he sees a crowd of lords, and, so long has the sword slumbered in the scabbard, not a sprig of laurel amongst the multitude.

The Young Lord turns his looks towards Westminster. He will practise the law. He looks into the courts: what clouds of wigs! How many hands yet innocent of briefs! Yea, every sea is filled with candidates for fees, and there is no abiding place for the Young Lord.

What, then, is to become of our young, our most interesting subject? Are all the avenues to fame and profit closed against him; or, at least, are they so beset by suitors that it is to lose all distinction to mingle among them? What, then is left for our Young Lord?

The reader is to be admonished that we would present society in its inevitable advancement. We do not picture the present Young Lord in this utter state of destitution; we do not assert this to be his case in 1839, but assuredly as his certain perplexing condition as the world wears on; as abuses, that is, privileges hitherto assured to him are amended, swept away by the spirit of the times. "Young raven must be fed:" Young Lords must be nourished; and

when all the thousand tails whereupon Young Lords exist are cut off by the fell shears of utility, either they must displace their brethren, the happy first-born enjoying all the milk of primogeniture from their feeding-places, insisting on an equal share of goods, or they must descend a step in the social scale, and ruffle it with the vulgar.

But the Young Lord will not so condescend. He has still the pride of birth—of ancestry; is still linked with the representative of his family; still has reflected upon him the barren lustre of his line. What, then, is to be the condition of the younger sons of pride and rank? What, in the social revolution, silently but steadily approaching,—what course is left to them? We see hope—yes, we descry land.

New Zealand—world of promise and of beauty!—rises upon the destitute. The Young Lord has still an outlet from crowded England—from the multitude amidst whom he is undistinguished, to a land where he may wax great and strong by the exercise of those very energies which he may not, from pride and prejudice, put forth at home. The position we have taken may, to the unreflecting—to those who see in the social state of the present day the type of that to come—appear Utopian, foolish; insulting to the illustrious persons to whom the argument applies. And yet the very progress of things indicates the issue. Saint Giles has sent forth his emigrants, and, in due season, so will Saint James.

The ship may not yet be built; nay, the acorns from which the timbers shall be grown, not yet in the earth; but the prophet sees her dropping down the Thames, and sees aboard her freight of younger sons.

———"The vanes sit steady
Upon the abbey towers. The silver lightnings
Of the evening star, spite of the city's smoke,
Tell that the north-wind reigns in the upper air.
Mark, too, that flock of fleecy-winged clouds,
Sailing athwart St. Margaret's!"

In the meantime, the Young Lord is the nursling of fortune. What knows he of the wants, the strugglings, the sympathies of life? It is ten to one that almost the whole purpose of his education is to render him indifferent to the great interests of humanity, inculcating within him a polished selfishness that reduces the whole world to his immediate circle; that makes him look upon all without that magic ring as naught. At college he takes honours as a matter of course, whilst the plebeian labours for them. Even in academic groves, he becomes fortified in those prejudices which separate him from the great mass of his fellow-men. Whilst ostensibly giving ear to "divine philosophy," he is the frequent scholar of riot and misrule. Bigotry finds him her aptest pupil; a ready soldier for her hoary rights; the panting follower of her low behests. In her cause he can wield a cudgel, and out-bellow Stentor; for her beloved sake he blows a catcall, and knocks down his man. Do you doubt this, reader? To Oxford, then, or Cambridge: go, and be converted.

The Young Lord of our day has, it must be owned, changed from his predecessor of fifty years ago. He is not the same hero of fortune, who, with impunity, might cane his footman, and kick his creditor. He is, by public opinion, put upon his good behaviour; and so, generally conforms to all the decencies. There are to be sure, exceptions; but we will not dwell upon them. There was a time when the Young Lord could take shelter from personal insignificance in his title: the nobleman could, as Sheridan has expressed it, "hide his head in a coronet; now it affords no concealment; but, on the contrary, is a mark, drawing the thoughts of men to test the value of the possessor.

The Young Lord must march with the times, or must be content to be left behind with the stragglers. This is the more incumbent on him as the old resources of his predecessors become every day less; more urgent, when every day serves to show the different destinies of lords who, like Brougham's pigs, are—lords born to teats and lords born to tails.

THE SPORTING GENTLEMAN.

BY NIMROD.

HUNTING has been called "a remnant of ancient barbarism;" and so called by one who, no doubt, called himself a clever fellow. The blockhead! The antiquity of the Goths is nothing to it; we scarcely travel over half a dozen pages of the Bible ere the sport begins.—"And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison," says the author of the twenty-seventh chapter of Genesis. Perhaps he did so from necessity; but that this pastime—which doubtless it soon became—seized on the affections of men beyond any other, is evident from its having stood the test of so many ages, improving as it were, in each, without any one venturing to attack what has such high authority to support it. As has been elegantly said of it, "it has (with us) long since become the great and exhilarating characteristic of the English country gentleman, transmitted by his ancestors to the present generation, equally pure and unimpaired with the glorious constitution under which he lives." We wish Solomon had tried it. He is said to have found the pleasures in women, wine, fine houses, fine gardens, gold, silver, and music, to be vanity and vexation of spirit; would that he had tried fox-hunting!

But to be serious. Field sports are congenial with the habits and taste of Englishmen, as well as peculiarly suited to their native pith and pluck; they have in fact, a natural tendency to inspire and promote manly spirits, and a free and generous conduct; whilst in the present state of society amongst the upper classes, they may be said to afford the only effectual counterbalance to the allurements of great towns and their consequences. Then, on the score of *health*, which is said to raise us above man and fate. Cowley says:—

"Here health itself doth live,
The salt of life which doth to all a relish give."

Look into the face of the Sporting Gentleman, and compare him with the town voluptuary—a sort of walking quagmire, with joints like rusty hinges. As the brightness of the flame consumes the fuel, so is he worn out long ere he attains the age of man; and how should it be otherwise? Independently of his dividing his time between an anxious conscience and a nauseated stomach, the very make and composure of the human system *demand* motion and exercise for its relief and preservation, and it will not go on regularly and well without them; and as action is natural and necessary, it is as pleasant as it is useful. Indolence is, in fact, the bane of repose, whereas exercise and fresh air produce easiness of mind, joined with clearness and strength of thought that fit us for anything of which we are capable, to say nothing of the truism—that the devil always employs an idle man.

It is true, there have been objections made to hunting; the most powerful of any, perhaps, by Addison, as resisting our compassion for the brute creation. A Frenchman, M. Pascal, says no man goes a-hunting unless it be to fly away from his thoughts; whilst Virgil, in his tenth Eclogue, makes Gallus fly to it, to relieve his love for his lost mistress, all other expedients having failed; no small recommendation, by the way, to its all-engrossing powers. But what value has the opinion of a Frenchman of Monsieur Pascal's day, on the merits or demerits of the chase? We might as well apply to, a Parisian for his notions of a pastoral, which seldom extend beyond a court; or to Sir Fopling Flutter, who considered all beyond Hyde Park Corner to have been a desert. Virgil was a Sporting Gentleman, and so was Pliny the Consul, both of whom extol the chase; and Horace speaks in disgust of an effeminate young Roman, who had given up the pursuit of manly and invigorating exercises; and, to crown all, Xenophon calls hunting a princely sport—the gift of the gods!

Divines, it is true, in their dark metaphysics, have been severe on hunting, and most others of our manly pursuits. By a perverse application of passages in the Old Testament, as well as from a corrupt interpretation of Evangelic precepts, the retirement and abstraction of a monastic life was represented as the state most favourable to virtue; but, happily for mankind, the more liberal use of reason has dispelled such mistaken notions. Providence never could have designed that this world should be filled with murnurs and repinings, or that the heart of man should be voluntarily involved in gloom and melancholy.

“What more grateful to the ear,
Than the voice that speaks to cheer!”

They forget that recreation is an essential part of life, inasmuch as it gives us strength to fulfil the duties of it; nay, further, it has been insisted upon by some, that to occupy one part of life in serious and important occupations, it is necessary to spend the other in amusements. Then, again, hunting is said to be the most threadbare of all threadbare subjects for the pen. This assertion is untrue. It cannot be unpoetical, for it holds out an opportunity to expatiate on the beauties of Nature, with which, Milton says, the devil himself was pleased.

The great Lord Falkland pitied an unlearned gentleman on rainy days—a censure generally applied to Sportsmen. It is true, that the Squire Western of his day was little better than an illiterate brute in the morning, and a drunken sot in the evening; such, however, is not the case now. But, let us proceed to a description of the Sporting Gentleman.

The Sporting Gentleman is for the most part of comely appearance, his countenance and frame denoting health and cheerfulness, and cheerful he generally is. And a rare virtue is cheerfulness;—it makes more friends than learning and wit into the bargain: in fact, it was a proverb among the ancients, that a man who can laugh heartily, will never cut your throat. It is malice and cunning that render him serious. It may be said of him, indeed, what Cicero said of Catiline—that he lives with the young, pleasantly; with the old, gravely;—that is to say, he is well bred enough to put all his friends and acquaintances at their ease. He abhors over-refinement, which he considers but a mark for profligacy, heartlessness, and insincerity; and often thinks what old Fabricius would say, were he to rise from the grave, and witness the over-strained and unnatural state of a great portion of the fashionable society of the present age. His house, however, abounds with every thing tending to convenience and comfort: partly with reference to his station and family, and also with a view to the repose necessary to himself and friends, after a good day's sport.

In his general conduct—in his transactions with the world—the Sporting Gentleman has a scrupulous regard to truth, with the most religious intention to fulfil every engagement he may enter into, which is the distinguishing characteristic of a gentleman. He has, in fact, been educated in the schools of honour—those of Eton and Christchurch, or others of equal note—which have inculcated the most delicate sensibility with respect to these points. But let us look a little closer into his character.

It is a singular fact, that there are thousands of country gentlemen possessing their thousands per annum, but who are scarcely known beyond the precincts of their own county. It is not so with the Sporting Gentleman. He is almost universally known by name and reputation, and not only in his native country, but on the continent. When Mr. Thomas Assheton Smith was presented to Napoleon at his court, he exclaimed, “*Ah! le grand chasseur d'Angleterre.*” And it does not require a man to be a master of fox-hounds, by which his name so frequently appears in newspapers, to be thus known. The mere fact of his being an accomplished Sportsman and horseman is sufficient to blazon him to the world. Where is the English gentleman who never heard of the late Lord Forrester and Lord Delamere, when they rejoiced in the less distinguished appellations of “Cecil Forrester,” and “Tom Cholmondeley?” And what raised

them to the peerage? Why, in great part, their celebrity in the hunting field, which introduced them to the friendship of George IV, added to that of half the nobility of England.

The Sporting Gentleman seldom entangles himself in the thorny mazes of politics—at all events, he is never found amongst the daring apostles of Utopian liberty, and would as soon see the devil at his table, as Joseph Hume or Daniel O'Connell. He is, however, a thorough loyal subject, and in former days his usual daily toast was, "Church and King, and *down with the Rump.*" Refinement has robbed him of his toast, but the sentiment is still cherished by the Sporting Gentleman.

The Sporting Gentleman is a great admirer of the female sex, and, if married, his wife is generally what is called a fine woman. His eye, being accustomed to regard the points of the brute creation, does not overlook them in woman, knowing that, on the principle of "like producing like," it is hopeless to look for fine and healthy progeny from an ugly, ill-formed mother. The Sporting Gentleman is also proud of his wife: takes her to London for a few weeks in the spring, as well as to all the races and race-balls in his neighbourhood; but, as he prefers the air of the country, and well-ventilated apartments to the heated saloons of London, his stay in the metropolis is short.

The Sporting Gentleman is very fond of his children, and puts them on horseback as soon as they can stride a saddle. He sends his sons to Eton for two seasons. He is partial to the Eton grammar, in the first place; and in the next, he was himself at Eton. He afterwards sends them to Oxford—where he also was—and to Christchurch, although warned by a friend of the expense. "I will make the sacrifice," is his answer, "for I wish my sons to be gentlemen." Should he have three, the second succeeds to the family advowson, and the third generally enters the army. The law is suggested as a fine field for the third, but the father has at once an answer, having recourse to poetry for a clincher:—

*"Tom struts a soldier—open, bold, and brave;
Will sneaks a scrivener—an exceeding knave."*

The daughters of the Sporting Gentleman are educated at home by a governess and other necessary instructors. He is too good a judge to send them to a boarding school, having been let into some of the proceedings of those seminaries as they are called—and not inaptly, inasmuch as they are the seed-plots of vice—by his wife. He also puts them on horseback at an early age, esteeming riding an accomplishment, but confines their excursions to the road. He has objections to their hunting; first, because he considers it not unattended with danger: secondly, his experience of the cover's side has taught him that it is not always the court of Diana.

The daughters of the Sporting Gentleman are generally much admired by the opposite sex, in great measure the consequence of their very healthy appearance, for there is nothing of voluptuousness about a woman without the display of good health. But the fact is, not only have the errors in the physical education of the body, in what Dr. Beddoes calls "the manufacturing them into ladies," been avoided,—such as pinching them off in the middle by tight lacing and so forth; but the preternatural forcing of their intellectual faculties, to the destruction of the vital energy of their frames, and the banishment of the bloom on the cheek has not been resorted to by these country-bred ladies,—and ladies they really are, notwithstanding the apparent laxity of their discipline, when compared with other systems. The daughters of the Sporting Gentleman are seldom cut off by consumption in the very budding of their womanhood, if not in still earlier life, but live to become mothers themselves, imparting a healthy offspring to posterity, untainted by hereditary disease.

The Sporting Gentleman is always an agriculturist to a certain extent, and often to a very considerable one, assisted in his operations by a Scotch bailiff, being aware that none other will keep his land clean, and consequently pro-

ductive, forasmuch as it cannot produce corn and weeds at the same time. He prides himself on his cattle and sheep, and now and then exhibits at the Smithfield show. In nine cases out of ten he is a liberal landlord, and from the following considerations. First, being himself a practical man, he knows what can be done on a farm; and, also, if the occupier is too highly taxed for rent, he is aware he cannot do justice to it. Secondly, his pursuits in life bringing him oftentimes in contact with his tenants, he has a feeling for their welfare beyond that of a mere landlord. They are brother sportsmen, in fact, and a bond of social union exists between them and their families, of great moral strength.

The Sporting Gentleman is a kind master to his servants—several of them being considered as heir-looms on the estate—descending from father to son; and dying in the service of the latter, or retiring on the fruits of their service. But he keeps a tight hand upon them, those in his stables especially—the high condition of his hunters, as well as the neat “turn out” of his equipages, being a grand consideration with him. Experience has taught him two lessons touching this matter,—the one, that servants like soldiers, under a relaxed system of mastership, are never really good; the other, that a good master makes good servants, kindness having more influence than fear.

The Sporting Gentleman prides himself on keeping what is called a good house—and in the real John Bull acceptation of this term—not a grand display in the family dining-room, with scantiness in the servants’ hall, but plenty everywhere, and to “comers and goers” as well. Still, without condescending to enter into the minutiae of the butlery and the pantry, his injunctions are, that there be no wilful waste. The butler looks to it in his department, and over the kitchen chimney-piece is this seasonable hint in letters six inches in length,—“Want not; waste not.” Neither are the poor of his neighbourhood forgotten by the Sporting Gentleman. Broken victuals and soup are served out to them twice a week through the winter, from his kitchen; and he gladdens their hearts at Christmas by a distribution of meat and coals, in addition to articles of female apparel, suitable to the season, by his lady.

The Sporting Gentleman gives a dinner to his tenants twice a year, at his rent days, and often presides at it himself. This latter point, however, is immaterial; he does what is much more beneficial to them and to his neighbours; he drops great part of the money he receives on the spot on which it is produced, in lieu of taking it to enrich strangers who neither know, nor care a rush for himself or any one belonging to him.

The Sporting Gentleman is oftentimes in parliament, and then generally for the county in which he lives. He is called upon by his station to go there, although it be not much to his taste; but when he does go, he goes as his hunter goes over the country, *with his head at liberty*; he will not stand a martingale. In other words he will suffer no one—not even the “unwashed”—to tell him how he is to act, or for or against what he is to vote. Neither is party his object. He wants no favours, the good of the country being his chief aim. In fact, he courts not popularity at its expense; he is too proud to do it:

—“This, my prize, I never shall forego;
This, who but touches, warriors, is my foe.”

The Sporting Gentleman is on the Turf. That is, he has two or three thorough-bred brood mares, and runs their produce at the neighbouring races—say, within a radius of fifty miles. Racing, with him, however, is only a secondary pursuit. Still, as far as he goes, he enters into it with spirit. He gives large sums for mares of the most fashionable blood, knowing that to breed from any other is to incur certain loss; and he selects the best stud-horses to breed from, regardless of the heavy expense. He is proud of his paddocks, which he has planned himself after the newest system, being about a fourth of the size of those in his father’s time; and his young racing stock are fed chiefly

on dry food, by which they are forced into size and form, and as such have generally the best of their neighbours. He does not back them at the post beyond a few pounds, still less attempt to make what is called "a Book," and this for two reasons. First—he is aware that there are very long odds against him, or against any other private gentleman on a race-course. Secondly, he is well assured that not one man in a thousand possesses the powers of calculation sufficient to enable him to make a winning-book; and lastly, it is not congenial with his feelings.* He considers it *infra dig.* to be in constant communication with a most disreputable order in society—the public betting-men of the day.

The Sporting Gentleman, however, occasionally performs the office of gentleman-jockey, at some of our first private race-meetings, and occasionally at public ones, for stakes whose articles express that the riders of the horses should be gentlemen. And he will take great pains to prepare himself for this office, either on his own account, or to serve a friend, whose horse he may be asked to ride. He will go through the regular process of training, by severe exercise, for wind, and of reducing his weight by fasting, each of which is no small sacrifice to those who have not been accustomed to any compulsory exertions and self-denials. Ambition, however, has something to do with all this: he is proud of, and anxious to display his fine horsemanship, and the winning a race, by a head, for a friend, is esteemed one of the most gratifying events of his life.

The Sporting Gentleman is proud of exhibiting his stables and their contents; and on the arrival of his sporting acquaintance and friends at his hall, the first walk is to his stables. The superior condition of his horses is his principal boast on these occasions; and it has been his aim to make as many converts as he can to the means by which it has been obtained, out of his regard to that noble animal, the horse, and from a wish to diminish his sufferings. Add to this, he urges this means—the in-door treatment of hunters in the summer—on the score of economy, assuring his friends, that five hunters so treated will do the work of six of those which have been summered in the fields, as was formerly the practice pursued by ninety-nine sportsmen in a hundred, to the destruction of a third of their studs by either accidents or diseases, of both of which it was the most prolific source.

Amongst other pastimes, the Sporting Gentleman is fond of what is termed "The Road;" and if he have not (as several of his genus have) a regular team of coach-horses at work all the year round, he generally contrives to make up what is called a "scratch team" in the summer—some of his hunters, who have rather lost their pace, contributing towards it. And he patronizes "The Road" and all that belongs to it. A mail and a stage-coach pass daily through his nearest village, at a certain public-house in which a refreshing glass is always ready, at his expense, for the coachmen and guards. He also directs his attention to the state of the roads in his neighbourhood; and to his countenance and presence are to be attributed sundry improvements and ameliorations in the important operations of travelling.

The Sporting Gentleman has once in his life been abroad—a foreign tour having been considered by his father an essential part of an English gentleman's education. But the continent is little to his taste; he misses the comforts of his hall, and the habits and pursuits of the people are at variance with his own.

The Sporting Gentleman is a preserver of game in his covers and woods, for the amusement of himself and his friends; but a still stricter preserver of foxes—finding from experience, that game and foxes can be preserved together, on the same spot. But he is not content with the tame diversion afforded by partridges

* It is a curious fact, that men who come under the true denomination of *Sportsmen*, are seldom ardent admirers of the Turf. On the day of the last Epsom Derby, three masters of fox-hounds, namely, Mr. Thomas Assheton Smith, the Earl of Kintore, and the Honourable Colonel Lowther, remained in London.

and pheasants; he visits Scotland in the August month, which, from the wildness of the quarry, is quite in unison with his idea of wherein the perfection of shooting consists. Neither is he content with grouse; but, with rifle in hand, pursues the stag of the forest, and has been known to kill from his own shoulder, upwards of sixty of those animals in one year—a feat that has been performed by the celebrated Captain Ross, Rossie Castle, N. B. He looks upon deer-stalking as the fox-hunting of shooting; and, on his return home, amuses his family and friends with a recital of what he has done. And he has a fine field for the descriptive. The majestic scenery of the Highlands; the motions of the deer under every variety of pursuit and danger; their sagacity and self-possession; their courage and noble bearing; the bay; the method in which they are prepared for being taken home; and many other particulars relating to their natural history and habits, are themes worthy of any man's tongue or pen.*

The Sporting Gentleman visits Melton Mowbray generally once in the year, for a longer or shorter period, as circumstances may direct; and occasionally spends the entire hunting-season in that emporium of fox-hunting. In the latter case, he is called upon to open his purse-strings, and increase the strength of his stud to the number of fourteen,—less not being sufficient for six days' hunting in each week, which the circumstance of there being three packs of foxhounds within daily reach of that town, enables him to avail himself of. And he is likewise called upon to make another addition to his establishment—namely, a first rate *man* cook. Mrs. Jennings is all very well—a top-sawyer, indeed, in the provincials,—but she will not do for Melton Mowbray. "*Nil ibi plebeium*," and next to a slow horse, nothing is less in character with the place than the animal so often sought after by housekeepers in other parts of the world, where the palate is not so refined,—namely, "the good plain cook."

It often happens that the Sporting Gentleman is himself the master of foxhounds; let us, then, look at him in that character. His heart and soul are in the whole thing, and he devotes half his time to it at least, forasmuch as, without the master's eye, and *that the eye of a sportsman*, a failure in some department of the undertaking is the natural and inevitable consequence. His object is to show sport to his field; to give satisfaction to the country; and in his endeavours to do so, he spares neither his purse nor his pains. Still, he does not launch out into unnecessary and ruinous expenses, it being his intention to continue to keep his hounds as long as he is able to follow them; and, not like Actæon of old, to be devoured by them in the prime of his days. Four thousand pounds a-year, then, is the sum he appropriates for the purpose, should he not accept a subscription; and he finds that, with good management, it will cover all expenses for four days' hunting in each week, and occasionally a bye-day. And such it should do; it is a large sum to pay chiefly for the amusement of others, and what no human being on earth, except a native of Great Britain, would ever dream of paying. Sancho Panza considered sporting pleasant when at other people's expense; and we are so far of his opinion, that except in cases of vast land possessions, all masters of foxhounds should be assisted by a subscription; and we say this from the knowledge of the great sacrifice of property that has already been made to the keeping of foxhounds; in some instances, indeed, to the irretrievable ruin of the too liberal individuals. But, referring to those who could afford the outlay which we have now stated as the annual charge of an efficient fox-hunting establishment, some curious facts may be related. It is well known that one celebrated sportsman, lately deceased, was the owner of foxhounds for fifty-seven years; here has been the immense sum of two hundred and twenty-eight thousand pounds expended by

* Should any of the readers of the "HEADS OF THE PEOPLE" be inclined to be initiated into the rudiments and mysteries of this noble sport, we recommend them the perusal of Mr. Scrope's elegant work, published last year by Mr. Murray.

one man, in one pursuit, supposing the above annual sum to have been disbursed in the charges attending it. We could name a dozen masters of fox-hounds for thirty consecutive years, at their own cost, each of which must have expended one hundred and twenty thousand pounds in the course of that period, and on the above-named account! Should fox-hunting be put an end to in this country, which, despite of evil forebodings, we hope it may not—and another century be completed ere the pen of the historian should record the doings of the present, the foregoing statement might go far towards shaking the faith of the reader in the veracity of the writer.

The hounds of the Sporting Gentleman are bred by himself with the greatest care, his idea on that subject being that nothing should be esteemed as characteristic of a species but what is found amongst the best and most perfect individuals of that species. He breeds largely, therefore, to enable him to draft his pack closely, and thus avoid the almost certain disappointment of entering hounds at all faulty in their make—at least, in points that are found to be essential to hard work. Whether or not he performs the office of huntsman to his own hounds—so much the custom of late years—depends on circumstances. Carthage produced but one Hannibal, and Great Britain is somewhat tardy in giving birth to men eminently qualified for this difficult task; and he may be of opinion that it might be more satisfactory to his field to trust it to the hands of a well-instructed servant. Should he, however, undertake it, he resembles not the Baronet in Humphrey Clinker, who commenced hunting without having served an apprenticeship to the mysteries of it, but brings to his aid the experience of at least a dozen years in the difficult science of the chase; and difficult it is, as all those who have given their time and attention to it will testify. On this subject, there is a remarkable passage in one of the letters of Pliny the Consul.—“I employ myself,” says he, “at my Tuscan villa, in hunting and studying, sometimes alternately, and sometimes both together; but I am not yet able to determine in which of these pursuits it is most difficult to succeed.” On another occasion, he tells a friend, how much the chase contributes to enliven the imagination, and elegantly assures him, he “will find Minerva as fond of traversing the hills as Diana.”

It may be objected, that I have drawn too flattering a picture of the Sporting Gentleman. Let me hasten, then, to disabuse the minds of such of my readers as may be of this opinion. The Sporting Gentleman is very far from immaculate—perfection is not the lot of humanity:—

“Virtue and vice in the same man are found,
And now they gain, and now they lose their ground.”

Still, as regards his morality, he is generally on a par with his neighbours. At all events, there is nothing demoralizing in his pursuits; on the contrary, the pastimes of the Sportsman have been found to be public benefits in more ways than one; and his example in the field is not without its effect. We have no slight authority for saying that the hearts of those men which are capable of being strung up to a high pitch of enthusiasm and determination in the chase—which is called the image of war—would fit them to lead columns in their country's battles; at the same time that they are found to possess, in the softer moments of relaxation and enjoyment, certain chords which vibrate the sweetest notes of pleasure; and the former of these positions is substantiated by the testimony of military officers, who have so often asserted that in the battle-field the most daring and gallant soldiers have been those which have been accustomed to field-sports.* Neither does the Sporting Gentleman spend his time in counteracting happiness; and, as Johnson has it, “filling the world with wrong and danger, confusion and remorse.” The converse is the case; the pursuits he indulges in promote happiness by finding employment for vast numbers of the commu-

* General Sir Hussey Vivian expressed himself very much to this purpose, a few years back, in his place in the House of Commons.

nity, both in trade and in servitude, and they are known to be the lion supporters of the agriculturist by the great demand for horses, and consequently for the produce of their land for their support. Let us hope, then, that although changes are gradually introduced by time in the habits and modes of thinking of mankind; and, notwithstanding the refinement of modern manners may contract, as it has done, the circle of, and abate the general ardour for, the sports of the field, room may still be found for the enjoyment of the manly pursuits of the chase; and also that the flagging spirit which has lately shown itself, may be revived by the generation that is to succeed us. As I have already observed, they have stood their ground from the earliest times: have been encouraged in all ages by the greatest of men; and cannot, therefore, now be supposed to dread censure or need support. They had their origin in Nature. And we have a pleasing foreboding that our hopes on this subject will be realized. The illustrious consort of our gracious Queen is a sportsman; and although, as the poet says—

"Who, from the morning's brightest ray,
Can promise what will be the day;"

We have a fair promise here, that by his example and influence, the sports of the field, in the country which has adopted him, will be upheld in their pristine vigour. And Prince Albert will find his account in this. It was one of the qualifications bestowed by Xenophon on his Cyrus, that he was a sportsman; and if the Scripture Nimrod had not been a sportsman, he would not have been a king. Add to this, all sportsmen are popular; and the historian, Sallust, has assured us that neither armies nor gold can preserve princes on their thrones;—they must reign in the affections of their people.

THE "LION" OF A PARTY.

EDITED BY DOUGLAS JERROLD.

A SUBTLE Italian, no less a man than the Counte Petechio, has called London "the grave of great reputations." In simple, prosaic phrase, this our glorious metropolis is—a vast cemetery for "Lions!" They are whelped every season; and frail and evanescent as buttercups, they every season die: that is, they do not die body and bones, but have a most fatal cutaneous and depilatory disorder—a mortality that goes skin-deep, and little more—a disease that strips them of their hide, and tail, and mane; yea, that makes the very "Lions" that, but a few months since, shook whole coteries with the thunder of their voices, roar as "gently as any sucking-doves." The ferocious dignity of the "Lion" in fine condition—the grimness of his smile—the lashing might of his muscular tail—all the grand and terrible attributes of the leonine nature pass away with the season—he is no longer a thing of wonder, a marvellously-gifted creature, at which

"—— the boldest hold their breath,
For a time,"

but a mere biped—simply, a human animal—a man, and nothing more! He walks and talks unwatched amid a crowd; and spinsters who but a year before, would have scarcely suppressed "a short, shrill shriek" at his approach, let him pass with an easy and familiar nod—it may be, even with a nod of patronage; or, if it happen that they remember his merits of the past season, they speak of them with the same philosophical coldness with which they would touch upon the tail and ears of a long-departed spaniel.

It is a sad thing for a "Lion" to outlive his majesty; to survive his nobler

attributes—it may be, lost to him in the very prime of life, thus leaving him bereft of all life's graces. And yet, how many men—"Lions" once, with flowing manes, and tails of wondrous length and strength—have almost survived even the recollection of their leonine greatness, and, conforming to the meekness and sobriety of tame humanity, might pass for nobodies.

Being desirous of furnishing the reader with the most full and particular account of the growth and death of the "Lion" of a Party, from the earliest appearance of his mane—from the first note of promissory thunder in his voice—carrying him through the affecting glories of his too short triumph, until every hair fell from his sinewy neck, his voice broke, and his tail—a thing that had been admired by countesses—was thin, and limp as any thread-paper; being, indeed, most anxious to lay before the reader a truly philosophical account of the emotions of the "Lion," varying with his rise and fall, we wrote a letter, explanatory of our object, to a gentleman—now a clergyman, late a "Lion"—in every way qualified to instruct and delight the reader on the important theme; and beg leave, on the part of our subscribers and ourselves, to acknowledge the spirit of courtesy and promptitude manifested in the subjoined communication—as we conceive, the very model of an epistle, albeit the publisher has his own opinion on the style of its conclusion:—

TO THE EDITOR OF "HEADS OF THE PEOPLE."

SATANSFIELD, NOV. 5, 1838.

Mr. Editor:—In reply to your flattering communication I have to announce to you my readiness to serve you, and instruct your numerous readers, on the terms herein subscribed; and shall, of course, consider the insertion of this letter in your inestimable publication—(I have not yet seen the first number, it having, unluckily, fallen into the hands of Lambskin, a most respectable attorney of this village, who, in a fit of indignation, consigned it to the flames, for, as he said, "the unprovoked, unprincipled, and atrocious libel contained in 'The Lawyer's Clerk,' on a profession involving the dearest interests of mankind—a profession that, &c. &c. &c.")—I shall, I say, consider the insertion of this letter as an acquiescence in what I trust will appear a very trifling remuneration, which, *as the money is to be expended on charitable objects, it will, I trust, be forwarded to me as above without one minute's delay.*

'To begin my history:—

I have been a "Lion;" have been taken "among ladies"—have "aggravated my voice"—have had my mane curled—my tail-knot decorated—my hide made sleek—my teeth filed—my nails sharpened—and have stood amidst a "party" as stands the portrait—(with a proof of which you have kindly favoured me)—to these my confessions.

Never shall I forget my sensations as I gradually changed from nobody to somebody—from mere John Nokes, to "Nokes, the author of —!"

How I rejoiced at the loss of "Mr.!" I was "Nokes!" In simple and expressive oneness—"Nokes!" I no longer owed anything to the courtesy of

* We may be wrong; our memory may deceive us; but when we were sub-sub-sub-editor to "The Gimcrack," the fashionable annual, which admitted no contributor under the rank of baronet, we think—we are pretty sure—we could almost swear—nay, we are ready to take our oath—that we have seen, generally in the form of postscript, the *very words* put in emphatic italic by our contributor from Satansfield, in the maiden's blush notes, of at least three of the nobility—the literary props and jewels of "The Gimcrack." It may be charged against us, that we have in our notice of this strange coincidence, shown ourselves ungrateful to our late employers; who, in the very dead time of winter, with coals at one-and-ten-pence per bushel, turned us off, and only for not knowing that Sir Mufflehead Bogby was an Irish knight, and not an English baronet; as, when we had given out "his copy"—a very sweet little poem to a "London Sparrow"—to be printed next to the Countess of Dewlap's "Thoughts in an Opera-box;" we had, in our limited knowledge of the baronetcy verily believed. And for this trifling mistake we were turned away, when coals—but an honest sense of pride, and manly independence, makes us dumb.—E.

life—to the cheap civilities of society—I had sloughed the common title bestowed on the “great vulgar and the small,” and was purely and greatly “Nokes.”

“Shakspeare.” “Dryden.” “Pope.”——“Nokes!”

I was astonished at the discoveries of my admirers. I found by all the reviews, that “I had the grace, the vigour, of ——, without the coarseness of ——;”——“the imagination of ——, but with no touch of the profanity of ——;” that “though —— had succeeded in depicting certain emotions, not even he, no, not even —— with all his genius, had flown so high a flight as the inimitable Nokes.” When reviewers enter into a conspiracy of praise, they do their work, it must be owned, most handsomely; in one little six months

“I had a ‘Lion’s’ mouth, with all my *tail* complete.”

In no less than eight reviews did I peruse these heart-delighting words, hanging like a golden fringe to the end of a satin-smooth yard of criticism. “No library can be considered complete without it.” IT—the book—MY book—the book of Nokes! What a sublime thought is this! and being so sublime, what a pity it is, it was then made so cheap! Happily for my enjoyments, I was then unconscious of its frequent application, and was therefore possessed and elevated by the comprehensiveness of the compliment, that made me—Nokes—essential to the refinement of generations present and to come!

“No library can be considered complete without IT.”

The Bodleian, wanting me, would be little more than a place for lumber—the library of the British Museum, an undigested mass of printed paper—in a word, every library on the face of the earth, with Nokes absent from its shelves, would cease to be, what Cicero has called it—the “soul of a house;” and must henceforth be considered a chaos of words and sentences.

There was, I repeat it, a conspiracy among the reviewers to lift me high, only to make my fall the greater. With a refinement of cruelty, they evidently bound themselves one to another, to face it out to all the world, that until Nokes arose, the world was in comparative darkness, but being risen, there was light indeed! From the moment that my roarings were first acknowledged, all men shrunk and dwindled; their brains lost “their cunning;” their books—written o’er and o’er with golden sentences; made beautiful with glowing scenes of life; consecrated against the tooth of time by the noblest wisdom, and the deepest truth (for all these pretty things had been said and printed of them); were, when I drew my grey-goose Hudson, made as “naught.” I dipped my pen in ink, and lo! the pages of all other men, from that moment, became blank paper. I nibbed my quill, and a hundred literary throats had mortal gashes!

Nor was this sufficient. It was not enough that all other men were slain, that I might sit upon a throne of carcasses; but the dead—the illustrious dead, as I had heard them called—were dragged from their tombs, and stripped of their winding-sheets to make my robes more ample. I was crowned the King of Foolecap and the Lord of Ink!

Years have elapsed since I felt the glow—the delirium of my new-born fame. I write this “a wiser and a sadder man;” but remembering, as I do, the “Nokes” mania—I had published a poem in quarto, on—(but it matters not,)—recollecting the “*furor Nokesius*” that—brought about by the confederacy of reviewers—afflicted the town, I am convinced—and I write this upon due deliberation, my mind happily raised above such vain distinctions, possessed, as it at present is, by domestic affections, the care of a tolerably large family, two cows, and a flock of geese—I am convinced that had I in my days of literary glory condescended to the meanness of publishing as my own composition—giving to the world as the bright-haired child of my own brain—the very beautiful, and, by the way, too much neglected old English ballad of “Nancy Dawson,” I should not have stood in need of benevolent critics, who would

have gone up to their very elbows in ink to make the ballad mine; and, in despite of the production of the original, have sneered it down as a contemptible slander, a venomous invention, the malignity of which was happily its own antidote.—Whilst, as a reinforcement, other generous critics would have risen up, and descanting on the graphic originality of my ballad, have advised—and in words not to be mistaken—"Shakespeare and Milton to look to their laurels!" Maturely considering the indulgence shown to me, can I think otherwise? Was I not eulogized as the first poet who, seeking into the hidden recesses of resemblances, had likened a "virgin" to an "ungathered flower?" Was I not smeared from the crown of my head to the sole of my foot with honey, for the simile of "life" and "a river?" Had any man—it was triumphantly asked—had any poet (and it only evinced the various and sublime capabilities of poetry, observed the reviewer, that so many thousand years had passed, and that so beautiful, and yet withal so palpable an emanation of true poesy had been reserved for the present day)—had any poet struck out so touching, so original a thought?

I swallowed this—every word of it; and every syllable did me, as I thought, a world of good. I fattened upon incense—grew corpulent upon musk. The evil hour came. I was put into a room in a party, with another poet, as Brummell would have said, "damp from the wet sheets of the press;" I caught cold—fell into a rapid consumption—and was in six months, typographically dead. I have dwelt thus long upon the cruel eulogies bestowed upon me by a brotherhood—a sworn band of critics—that the reader may judge me with charity, when shaking my mane, showing my teeth, and twisting my tail at the hundred parties, whereof I was the principal attraction; or, in more familiar phrase, the "Lion!" What an atmosphere of joy I breathed! I stood and moved with five hundred lovely eyes upon my tail; and, whenever I turned my head, I beheld smiles, and now and then heard sighs that—but no! I am now a married man.

How the women would flutter, and smile, and blush as I approached! how would they drink my words as they were honey-dew; how, with downcast eyes and hesitating lips, would they venture to praise my "divine poem;" and then—how would they bind me in a solemn promise "to write something—if only a line" in their albums!

Was it possible for a mere "Lion" to endure these blandishments with no change of head or heart? Was it possible to hear myself quoted—and by such lips—and remain nothing more than Nokes? To be assured that my lines were inevitably to the end of the world household things—creatures that would perish only with the language—to be told that poetry had "received a diviner form, a higher influence—was destined to work a mightier change in the social habits of a people than could have ever been predicted for it, and all since the appearance of Nokes?" Now, such were the precise words—for they sank indelibly into my heart—conveyed to me at "a party," by a tall gentleman in a blood-coloured satin waistcoat, embellished with gold caterpillars, who having hunted me into a corner, and delivered himself of the above opinion, immediately put his card into my hand, and tried, but could not express the sense of honour he should feel, if I would but condescend to sit to him for Somerset House! Now, the painter with the gold caterpillars was the tenth artist who, on the evening in question, had flattered me by a like request. Eight I had already promised, and—

And here I feel it due to Mildpen—(by the way, he had never been a "Lion," though he tried hard for the dignity; but somehow, when he strove to roar, he could rise to nothing better than whistling; and for mane and tail, they would not come kindly, do what he might)—I feel it due to Mildpen to state that it was he who saved me from the ninth promise; for I caught his benevolent eye, and saw his expressive mouth, and I civilly refused; Mildpen congratulated me on my escape; assuring me that the man was "a vulgar dog

—a pot-house artist—a fellow who knew nothing of *society*, as he piqued himself on the stern reality of his likenesses, never putting a single spoonful of sugar into his colours, but painting authors just as they were. Now in the hands of Honeybrush—the gold-caterpillar artist—you are safe; he, depend upon it, will treat you like a gentleman." With this assurance, I sat to Honeybrush; and am bound to say that he turned me out of hand in a very satisfactory condition. He painted me with a military cloak slipping off my shoulders—most literary lions were then painted in military cloaks, as if at their leisure hours they were majors of cavalry—my hand, with ten rings upon it, supporting my head—my forehead an enormous piece of white paint, and my eyes fixed upon a star, poetically placed in the corner of the picture within an inch of the frame. I was seated on a rock, with a very handsome inkstand beside me, and my right hand grasping, as if in a spasm of inspiration, an eagle's feather! Altogether I made a very pretty show; though a contemptible critic—after my leonine death—declared the picture to be an ingenious mixture of the seraph and the man-milliner.

It would, probably, Mr. Editor, lead me beyond your prescribed limits, were I to touch upon all the portraits painted of me in my roaring state. It may be sufficient for me to observe, that the artists have caught me in every possible variety of attitude and expression: cross-legged—leaning—sprawling—with arms folded, and arms a-kimbo—contemplative—smiling—sneering—and for the admirers of the sublime and dignified, according to Dryden:—

"I looked a 'Lion' with a gloomy stare,
And o'er my forehead hung my matted hair!"

This last portrait, I am happy to state, was hung so high, and in so dark a corner, that very few ladies knew of its existence.*

However, to quit the pictorial theme, which I resign with renewed acknowledgments of the kindness of Mildpen, a really fine fellow—at the present moment, I am told, editing "The Weekly 'Thunderbolt'" in Penzance—an excellent fellow, for it was he, who on our return from a party in Fitzroy Square, in a moment of high excitement, pointed out to me the shop (the only shop in London) in Tottenham Court Road, where white kid gloves were cleaned at only three-pence per pair; white kid gloves being, in my days, a more exclusive wear than at present: a most expensive article of dress too, for mere literary "Lions," for I know not how others have suffered, but I never took mine off at any party, that I did not lose at least one of them.†

I have endeavoured to describe my sensations as my leonine nature came upon me; I have now—and I shall as briefly as possible touch upon the distressing theme—to speak of my feelings as I again felt myself falling back to mere man. My fate is, however, the fate of all "Lions."

I was in the strength of my reputation, when Buggins, the great poet and romance-writer, arose.

"We met—'t was in a crowd;"

but I saw the women hanging round him—all the ten artists, nine of whom had *done* me, watching him to catch him for "Somerset House"—a fashionable

* Should Mrs. Nokes wish to possess this painting, we are happy to inform her, that it is now on sale, dog-cheap, at the left-hand corner shop of Broker's Row, Hanover Street, Long Acre; we saw it only yesterday.—Ed.

† Mr. Nokes will regret to hear that the worthy individual who kept this most convenient establishment—we know it well—has since been bankrupt. Mr. Nokes alludes to his losses of kid gloves whilst a "Lion:" in the simplicity and ingenuousness of his nature, he is apparently ignorant of an astonishing but withal complimentary fact. The truth is, let a "Lion" of a party only unglove himself, and the women—we have seen them do it—steal the kids. The pretty enthusiasts *will* have a relic of "the wonderful creature," and thus commit a theft, which even the sufferer must, as we have observed, allow to be very complimentary. How courageous are women when they really admire! To seize a piece of kid from the very paws of a "Lion."—Ed.

publisher (turning his back to me) glaring at Buggins, as if he would have looked into his very bowels for "copy,"—and two editors of rival magazines (their backs to me) smiling graciously on what I felt to be *the* "Lion" of the night.

I retired early from the scene; and never—never shall I forget the cool insolence with which one of my former worshippers, a beautiful girl, who had already appeared in one of the handsomest of the annuals, met me retreating to the door, and with her eye on Buggins, and half turning her back to me, she cried "What! going? good-bye."

I went home, suspecting, nay more than suspecting, my fallen condition. The fact, however, was put beyond a doubt, when in the next number of "The Annihilator," I read the following passage—a passage taken from fifty eulogies redolent of incense. The words were as follows:—

"To say that Buggins has risen beyond all former poets in the portraiture of men and things is to say nothing; as he has surpassed all men, so will no man ever surpass him. In a word, he has all the grandeur (and ten times more) of Nokes, *without* one particle of his weakness!"

That "*without*!" My fate was sealed; from that moment my mane came off by handfuls!

The "weakness of Nokes!" I who had been quoted—lauded for energy—superhuman power—but it matters not; had I malice, the evil passion would be more than satisfied, for in a year or two afterwards, I perceived in "The Annihilator," the following gratifying intelligence:—

"For Slopskin—the new star that has risen in the firmament of literature—it may be truly said of him, that he has more than all the vigour of Buggins, without his poverty of expression."

And what is Slopskin now? No "Lion," but Bottom the weaver. Another "Lion" came with a "*without*" a something of Slopskin, and lo! Slopskin is now mere mortal man.

I retired from London in disgust; having, however, had the satisfaction of seeing myself bound in sheep for the use of schools—went to college—entered the church, and here I am in the parish of Satansfield, on the limited income of two hundred pounds per annum, house-rent, coals, and candles, included; no "Lion," but an unshaken pillar of Protestant ascendancy—please to direct Mr. TYAS to immediately forward me the thirty pounds for this article, and believe me yours, truly and affectionately,

JOHN NOKES.

We will add nothing to the "confessions" of the late "LION:"—they shall stand unmixed "with baser matter."

THE YOUNG SQUIRE.

BY WILLIAM HOWITT.

THE old squire and the Young Squire are the antipodes of each other. They are representatives of two entirely different states of society in this country; the one but the vestige of that which has been; the other, the full and perfect image of that which is. The old squires are like the last fading and shrivelled leaves of autumn that yet hang on the tree. A few more days will pass; age will send one of his nipping nights; and down they will twirl, and be swept away into the oblivious hiding-places of death, to be seen no more. (But the Young Squire is one of the full-blown blossoms of another summer. He is flaunting in

the sunshine of a state of wealth and luxury which we, as our fathers in their day did, fancy can be by no possibility carried many degrees further, and yet we see it every day making some new and extravagant advance.

It is obvious that there are many intermediate stages of society amongst our country gentry between the old squire and the young, as there are intermediate degrees of age. The old squires are those of the completely last generation, who have outlived their contemporaries, and have made a dead halt on the ground of their old habits, sympathies, and opinions; and are resolved to quit none of them for what they call the follies and new-fangled notions of a younger and, of course, more degenerate race. They are continually crying, "Oh, it was never so in my day!" They point to tea, and stoves in churches, and the universal use of umbrellas, parasols, cork-soled shoes, warming-pans, and carriages, as incontestible proofs of the rapidly increasing effeminacy of mankind. But between these old veterans and their children, there are the men of the middle ages, who have, more or less, become corrupted with modern ways and indulgences; have, more or less, introduced modern furniture, modern hours, modern education and tastes, and books; and have, more or less, fallen into the modern custom of spending a certain part of the year in London. With these we have nothing whatever to do. The old squire is the landmark of the ancient state of things, and his son Tom is the epitome of the new; all between is a mere transition and evanescent condition.

Tom Chesselton was duly sent by his father to Eton as a boy; where he became a most accomplished scholar in cricket, boxing, horses, and dogs, and made the acquaintance of several lords, who taught him the way of letting his father's money slip easily through his fingers, without burning them, and engrafted him besides with a stock of fine and truly aristocratic tastes which will last him his whole life. From Eton he was as duly transferred to Oxford; where he wore his gown and trencher cap, with a peculiar grace, and gave a classic finish to his taste in horses, in driving, and in ladies. Having completed his education with great *éclat*, he was destined by his father, to a few years' soldiership in the militia, as being devoid of all danger, and, moreover, giving opportunities for seeing a great deal of the good old substantial families in different parts of the kingdom. But Tom turned up his nose, or, rather, his handsome upper lip, with a most consummate scorn at so grovelling a proposal, and assured his father that nothing but a commission in the Guards, where several of his noble friends were doing distinguished honour to their country, by the display of their fine figures, would suit him. The old squire shrugged his shoulders, and was silent, thinking that the six thousand pounds purchase-money would be quite as well at fifteen per cent. in consul shares a little longer. But Tom luckily was not doomed to rusticate long in melancholy under his paternal oaks; his mother's brother, an old bachelor of immense wealth, died just in time, leaving Tom's sister, Lady Spankitt, thirty thousand pounds in the funds, and Tom, as heir-at-law, his great Irish estates. Tom, on the very first vacancy, bought into the Guards, and was soon marked out by the ladies as one of the most *distingué* officers that ever wore a uniform. In truth, Tom was a very handsome fellow—that he owed to his parents, who, in their day, were as noble looking a couple as ever danced at a country ball, or graced the balcony of a race-stand.

Tom soon married; but he did not throw himself away sentimentally on a mere face; he achieved the hand of the sister of one of his old college chums, and now brother officer, the Lady Barbara Ridemdown. An earl's daughter was something in the world's eye; but such an earl's daughter as Lady Barbara was the height of Tom's ambition. She was equally celebrated for her beauty, her wit, and her handsome fortune: Tom had won her from amidst the very blaze of popularity, and the most splendid offers. Their united fortunes enabled them to live in the highest style. Lady Barbara's rank and connections de-

manded it, and the spirit of our Young Squire required it as much. Tom Chesselton disdained to be a whit behind any of his friends, however wealthy or highly titled. His tastes were purely aristocratic: with him, dress, equipage, and amusements, were matters of science. He knew, both from a proud instinct and from study, what was precisely the true *ton* in every article of dress or equipage, and the exact etiquette in every situation. But Lady Barbara panted to visit the continent, where she had already spent some years, and which presented so many attractions to her elegant tastes. Tom had elegant tastes too, in his way; and to the continent they went. The old squire never set his foot on even the coast of Calais: when he has seen it from Dover, he has only wished that he could have a few hundred tons of gunpowder, and blow it into the air;—but Tom and Lady Barbara have lived on the continent for years.

This was a bitter pill for the old squire. When Tom purchased his commission in the Guards, and when he opened a house like a palace, on his wedding with Lady Barbara, the old gentleman felt proud of his son's figure, and proud of his connections. "Ah," said he, "Tom is a lad of spirit; he'll sow his wild oats, and come to his senses presently." But when he fairly embarked for France, with a troop of servants, and a suit of carriages like a nobleman, then did the old fellow fairly curse and swear, and call him all the unnatural and petticoat pinioned fools in his vocabulary, and prophesy his bringing his ninepence to a groat. Tom and Lady Barbara, however, upheld the honour of England all over the continent. In Paris, at the Baths of Germany, at Vienna, Florence, Venice, Rome, Naples—everywhere were they distinguished by their fine persons, their fine equipage, their exquisite tastes, and their splendid entertainments. They were courted and caressed by all the distinguished, both of their own countrymen and of foreigners. Tom's horses and equipage were the admiration of the natives. He drove, he rode, he yachted to universal admiration; and meantime his lady visited all the galleries and works of art, and received in her house all the learned and the literary of all countries. There you always found artists, poets, travellers, critics, dilettanti, and connoisseurs, of all nations and creeds.

They have again honoured their own country with their presence; and who so much the fashion as they? They are, of course, *au fait* in any matter of taste and fashion; on all questions of foreign life, manners, and opinions, their judgment is the law. Their town house is in Eaton Square; and what a house is that! What a paradise of fairy splendour; what a mine of wealth, in the most superb furniture; in books in all languages, paintings, statuary, and precious fragments of the antique, collected out of every classical city and country. If you see a most exquisitely tasteful carriage, with a more fascinatingly beautiful lady in it, in the park, amidst all the brilliant concourse of the ring, you may be sure you see the celebrated Lady Barbara Chesselton; and you cannot fail to recognize Tom Chesselton the moment you clap eyes on him, by his distinguished figure, and the splendid creature on which he is mounted—to say nothing of the perfection of his groom, and the steed he also bestrides. Tom never crosses the back of a horse of less value than a thousand pounds; and if you want to know really what horses are, you must go down to his villa, at Wimbledon, if you are not lucky enough to catch a sight of him proceeding to a levee, or driving his four-in-hand to Ascot or Epsom. All Piccadilly has been seen to stand, lost in silent admiration, as he has driven his splendid britchzka along it, with his perfection of a little tiger by his side, and such cattle as never besides were seen in even harness of such richness and elegance. Nay, some scores of ambitious young whips became sick of sheer envy of his superb, gauntlet driving-gloves.

But, in fact, in Tom's case, as in all others, you have only to know his companions to know him; and who are they but Chesterfield, Conyngham, D'Orsay, Eglintoun, my Lord Waterford, and men of similar figure and reputation? To say

that he is well known to all the principal frequenters of the Carlton Club; that his carriages are of the most perfect make ever turned out by Windsor; that his harness is only from Shipley's; and that Stultz has the honour of gracing his person with his habiliments; is to say that our Young Squire is one of the most perfect men of fashion in England. Lady Barbara and himself have a common ground of elegance of taste, and knowledge of the first principles of genuine aristocratic life; but they have very different pursuits, arising from the difference of their genius, and they follow them with the utmost mutual approbation.

Lady Barbara is at once the worshipped beauty, the woman of fashion, and of literature. No one has turned so many heads by the loveliness of her person, and the bewitching fascination of her manners, as Lady Barbara. She is a wit, a poet, a connoisseur in art; and what can be so dangerously delightful as all these characters in a fashionable beauty, and a woman, moreover, of such rank and wealth? She does the honours of her house to the mutual friends and noble connections of her husband and herself with a perpetual grace; but she has, besides, her evenings for the reception of her literary and artistic acquaintance and admirers. And who, of all the throng of authors, artists, critics, journalists, connoisseurs, and amateurs who flock there, are not her admirers? Lady Barbara Chesselton writes travels, novels, novellets, philosophical reflections, poems, and almost every species of thing which ever has been written, such is the universality of her knowledge, experience, and genius; and who does not hasten to be the first to pour out in reviews, magazines, daily and hebdomadal journals, the earliest and most fervent words of homage and admiration? Lady Barbara edits an annual, and is a contributor to "The Keepsake;" and, in her kindness, she is sure to find out all the nice young men about the press, to encourage them by her smile, and to raise them, by her fascinating conversation and her brilliant saloons, above those depressing influences of too sensitive modesty, which so weighs on the genius of the youth of this age, so that she sends them away all heart and soul in the service of herself and literature (which are the same thing); and away they go, extemporising praises on her ladyship, and spreading them through leaves of all sizes, to the wondering eyes of readers all the world over. Publishers run with their unsaleable MSS., and beg Lady Barbara to have the goodness to put her name on the title, knowing by golden experience that that one stroke of her pen, like the point of a galvanic wire, will turn all the dulness of the dead mass into flame. Lady Barbara is not barbarous enough to refuse so simple and complimentary a request: nay, her benevolence extends on every hand. Distressed authors, male and female, who have not her rank, and, therefore, most clearly not her genius, beg her to take their literary bantlings under her wing; and, with a heart as full of generous sympathies as her pen is of magic, she writes but her name on the title as an "Open Sesame!" and, lo! the dead becomes alive, her genius permeates the whole volume, which that moment puts forth the wings of popularity, and flies into every bookseller's shop and every circulating library in the kingdom.

Such is the life of glory and Christian benevolence which Lady Barbara daily leads, making authors, publishers and critics all happy together, by the overflowing radiance of her indefatigable and inexhaustible genius, though she sometimes slyly laughs to herself, and says, "What a thing is a title!—if it were not for that, would all these people come to me?"—while Tom, who is member of parliament for the little borough of Dearish, most patriotically discharges his duty by pairing off—visits the classic grounds of Ascut, Epsom, Newmarket, or Goodwood, or traverses the moors of Scotland and Ireland in pursuit of grouse. But once a year they indulge their filial virtues in a visit to the Old Squire. The Old Squire, we are sorry to say, has grown of late years queer and snappish, and does not look on this visit quite as gratefully as he should. "If they would but come," he says, "in a quiet way, as I used to ride over and see my

father in his time, why I should be right glad to see them ; but here they come, like the first regiment of an invading army, and God help those who are old and want to be quiet."

The old gentleman, moreover, is continually haranguing about Tom's folly and extravagance. It is his perpetual topic to his wife, and wife's maiden sister, and to Wagstaff. Wagstaff only shakes his head, and says, "Young blood! young blood!"—but Mrs. Chesselton and the maiden sister say, "Oh! Mr. Chesselton, you don't consider: Tom has great connections, and he is obliged to keep a certain establishment. Things are different now to what they were in our time. Tom is universally allowed to be a very fine man, and Lady Barbara is a very fine woman, and a prodigious clever woman!—a prodigious clever woman!—and you ought to be proud of them, Chesselton." At which the old gentleman breaks out, if he is a little elevated over his wine,—

"When the Duke of Leeds shall married be
To a fine young lady of high quality,
How happy will that gentlewoman be
In his grace of Leeds' good company!

"She shall have all that's fine and fair,
And the best of silk and satin to wear;
And ride in a coach to take the air;
And have a house in St. James's Square."

Lady Barbara always professes great affection and reverence for the old gentleman, and sends him many merry and kind compliments and messages; and sends him, moreover, her new books as soon as they are out, most magnificently bound; but all won't do. He only says, "If she'd please me, she'd give up that cursed opera-box. Why, the rent of that thing, only to sit in and hear Italian women, and men more womanish than any women, squealing and squealing; and to see impudent, outlandish baggages kicking up their heels higher than any decent heads ought to be—the rent, I say, would maintain a parish rector, or keep half-a-dozen parish schools a-going." As for her books, that all the world besides are in raptures about, the old squire turns them over as a dog would a hot dumpling; says nothing but a Bible ought to be so extravagantly bound; and professes that "the matter may be all very fine, but he can make neither head nor tail of it." Yet, whenever Lady Barbara is with him, she is sure to talk and smile herself in about an hour into his high favour; and he begins to run about to show her this and that, and calls out every now and then, "Let Lady Barbara see this, and go to look at that." She can do anything with him except get him to London. "London!" he exclaims, "no; get me to Bedlam at once. What has a rusty old fellow, like me, to do at London? If I could find again the jolly set that used to meet, thirty years ago, at 'The Star and Garter,' Pall Mall, it might do; but London isn't what London used to be; it's too fine, by half, for a country squire, and would drive me distracted in twenty-four hours, with its everlasting noise and nonsense!"

But the old squire does get pretty well distracted with the annual visit. Down come driving the Young Squire and Lady Barbara, with a train of carriages like a fleet of men of war, leading the way with their travelling coach and four horses. Up they twirl to the door of the old hall. The old bell rings a thundering peal through the house. Doors fly open, out run servants—down come the young guests from their carriage; and, while embraces and salutations are going on in the drawing-room, the hall is fast filling with packages upon packages; servants are running to and fro along the passages; grooms and carriages are moving off to the stables without; there is lifting and grunting at portmanteaus and imperials as they are borne upstairs; while ladies' maids and nurse maids are crying out, "Oh, take care of that trunk!—mind that bau'-box!—oh, gracious! that is my lady's dressing-case: it will be down, and be ruined totally!" Dogs are barking, children crying or romping about, and the whole house is in a most blessed state of bustle and confusion.

For a week the hurly-burly continues: in pour all the great people to see Tom and Lady Barbara. There are shootings in the mornings and great dinner parties in the evenings. Tom and my lady have sent down before them plenty of hampers of such wines as the old squire neither keeps nor drinks; and they have brought their plate along with them; and the old house itself is astonished at the odours of champagne, claret, and hock, that pervade—and at the glitter of gold and silver in it. The old man is full of attention and politeness both to his guests and to their guests: but he is half-worried with the children, and t'other half worried with so many fine folks; and muddled with drinking things that he is not used to, and with late hours. Wagstaff has fled, as he always does on such occasions, to a farm-house on the verge of the estate. The hall and the parsonage, and even the gardener's house, are all full of beds for guests, and servants, and grooms. Presently, the old gentleman, in his morning rides, sees some of the young bucks shooting the pheasants in his home park, where he never allows them to be disturbed; and comes home in a fume to hear that the house is turned upside down by the host of scarlet-breeched and powdered livery servants; and that they have turned all the maids' heads with sweet-hearting. But at length the day of departure arrives, and all sweep away as suddenly and rapidly as they came; and the old squire sends off for Wagstaff, and blesses his stars that what he calls "the annual hurricane" is over.

But, what a change will there be here when the Old Squire is dead! Already have Tom and Lady Barbara walked over the ground and planned it. That "horrid fright" of an old house, as they call it, will be swept as clean away as if it had not stood there five hundred years. A grand Elizabethan pile is already decreed to succeed it. The fashionable architect will come driving down in his smart close cab, with all his plans and papers. A host of mechanics will come speedily after him by coach or by wagon. Booths will be seen rising all round the old place, which will vanish away, and its superb successor rise where it stood, like a magical vision. Already are ponderous cases lying loaded, in London, with massive mantel-pieces of the finest Italian marble, marble busts, and heads of old Greek and Roman heroes, genuine burial urns from Herculaneum and Pompeii, and vessels of terracotta, gloriously sculptured vases, and even columns of verde-antique, all from classic Italy, to adorn the halls of this same noble new house. But, meantime, spite of the large income of Tom and Lady Barbara, the Old Squire has strange suspicions of mortgages and dealings with Jews. He has actual inklings of horrid post-obits; and groans as he looks on his old oaks as he rides through his woods and parks, foreseeing their overthrow; nay, he fancies he sees the land-agent amongst his quiet old farmers, like a wild cat in a rabbit-warren, startling them out of their long dream of ease and safety, with news of doubled rents, and notices to quit, to make way for thrashing machines and young men of more enterprise. And, sure enough, such will be the order of the day the moment the estate falls to the Young Squire.

THE FARMER'S DAUGHTER.

BY WILLIAM HOWITT.

THERE'S a world of buxom beauty flourishing in the shades of the country. Farm-houses are dangerous places. As you are thinking only of sheep, or of curds, you may be suddenly shot through by a pair of bright eyes, and melted away in a bewitching smile that you never dreamt of till the mischief was done. In towns, and theatres, and thronged assemblies of the rich and the titled fair, you are on your guard; you know what you are exposed to, and put on your

breast-plates, and pass through the most deadly onslaught of beauty—safe and sound. But in those sylvan retreats, dreaming of nightingales, and hearing only the lowing of oxen, you are taken by surprise. Out steps a fair creature, crosses a glade, leaps a stile; you start, you stand—lost in wonder and astonished admiration; you take out your tablet to write a sonnet on the return of the nymphs and dryades to earth, when up comes John Tompkins, and says, “It’s only the Farmer’s Daughter!” What! have farmers such daughters now-a-days? Yes. I tell you they have such daughters—those farm-houses are dangerous places. Let no man with a poetical imagination, which is but another name for a very tindery heart, flatter himself with fancies of the calm delights of the country; with the serene idea of sitting with the farmer in his old-fashioned chimney-corner, and hearing him talk of corn and mutton—of joining him in the pensive pleasures of a pipe, and brown jug of October; of listening to the gossip of the comfortable farmer’s wife; of the parson and his family, of his sermons and his tenth pig—over a fragrant cup of young hyson, or lapt in the delicious luxuries of custards and whipt-creams: in walks a fairy vision of wondrous witchery, and with a curtesy and a smile, of most winning and mysterious magic, takes her seat just opposite. It is the Farmer’s Daughter! A lively creature of eighteen. Fair as the lily, fresh as May-dew, rosy as the rose itself; graceful as the peacock perched on the pales there by the window; sweet as a posy of violets and “clove-gillivvers;” modest as early morning, and amiable as your own imagination of *Desdemona*, or *Gertrude of Wyoming*.

You are lost! It’s all over with you. I wouldn’t give an empty fibert, or a frog-bitten strawberry for your peace of mind, if that glittering creature be not as pitiful as she is fair. And that comes of going into the country, out of the way of vanity and temptation; and fancying farm-houses only nice old-fashioned places of old-fashioned contentment.

Ay, many a one has found, to his sorrow, what trusting himself amongst barrel-churns, and rows of bee-hives has cost him. His resolutions of bachelor independence have been whirled round and round, and resolved themselves into melting butter; he has been stung by the queen-bee, in the eye, and has felt all over pangs and twinges, as if the whole swarm had got into his bosom. Then has come a desperate liking to that part of the country; the taking that neat cottage just out of the village, with its honey-suckle porch, and willow arbour by the brook; the sauntering down the foot-path that leads past the farm of a summer’s evening, with a book of poetry in the hand; the seat on the stile at the bottom of the wood; the sudden looking up—“How sweet that farm house *does* look! What fine old trees those are about it! And that dear little window in the old gable, with its open casement and its diamond panes. And, Oh! surely! yes—that is Anne herself, and I think she is looking this way!”

Then follow the sweetest walks down by the mill; the sweetest moonlight leaps over the sunk fence at the bottom of the garden; the most heavenly wanderings along that old quince walk—such vows! such poetry of passion! such hopes and promises of felicity; and then the old farmer looks over the hedge, and says, “Who’s there?” There, this is a pretty go! Off goes Anne like the spirit of a young lamplighter up the garden, through the house, up the stairs at three strides, and there she is, locked and bolted in that dear little chamber, with the little diamond window in the old gable. She has sunk into a chair (it is a very soft one, cushioned comfortably all round, seat, back, and elbows), and very wet is that white cambric handkerchief which she holds to her eyes.

But where is Captain Jenkinson? Oh! he’s there!—and he’s too bold and too true a lover to fly or sneak. There they stand, face to face, in the moonlight, the tall, slim Captain Jenkinson, and the tall stout Farmer Field, with his hugh striped waistcoat, ready to burst with hurry and indignation, and his great stick in his hand. “What, is that you, captain! My eye? What! was

that you, a talking to our Anne?" "Yes, friend Field, it is I; it is the Captain, that was talking to your adorable Anne: and here I am ready to marry her with your consent, for never shall woman be my wife but your charming Anne!"

How that great elephant of a farmer stands lifting up his face, and laughing in the moonlight! How that "fair round *corporation*, with good capon lined" (good Shakespeare, pardon our verbal variation in this quotation, in courtesy to the delicacy of modern phrases)—how those herculean limbs do shake with laughter! But, now, as the tears stream down his face, he squeezes the youth's hand, and says, "Who could have thought it, captain—eh? Ha! ha! Well, we're all young and foolish once in our lives—but come! no more on't—it won't do, captain, it won't do!"

"Won't do! won't do! why shouldn't it do, farmer, why shouldn't it do?" "Why, because it won't, and that's why—a captain and old Farmer Field's lass—ha! ha! What will Lady Jenkins say, eh? What 'ull that half-a-dozen of old guardians say—eh? The Honourable Captain Jenkinson and the daughter of old Farmer Field! What 'ull they say—eh? Say I'm a cunning old codger; say I've trapped you, belike. No, no—they shan't say so, not a man-jack of 'em. Not one of the breed, seed, and generation of 'em, shall say old Farmer Field pained his daughter on a gentleman for his houses and his lands. No, Anne's a tight lass, and John Wright will come at the right time; and when you're married to my lady Fitz somebody, and Anne's got the right man, come down, captain, and kill us a pheasant, and set up your horses and your dogs here, and we'll have a regular merry do, and another good laugh at our youthful follies!"

But all won't do. The captain vows he'll shoot all the old guardians of a row, and tell his mother to shoot him, if they make any opposition; and the very same night he sticks a note on the top of his fishing-rod, and taps with it at Anne's little window, with the diamond panes, in the old gable; and Anne, jumping from the easy chair, looks out, seizes the paper, clasps her hands, casts down a most affectionate but inconsolable look, and sighs an eternal adieu!—then flying to read the note, finds the captain vowing that "she may cheer up, all *shall* go right, or that he will manfully drown himself in the mill-dam."

Now, there is a pretty situation of affairs! and all that through incautiously wandering into the country, of a summer's evening, and getting into one of these old-fashioned farm-houses. It would serve them all right to leave them in their trouble. It might act as a warning to others, and place the dangers of the country in their genuine light. But as the captain would be almost certain to drown himself, he is so desperate, (and then there must be a coroner's inquest, and we might, at a very inconvenient moment, be called up to serve upon it,) we will for this once let things pass—all *shall* be right. The guardians relent, because they can't help themselves. Lady Jenkinson bounces a good bit, but like all bodies of a considerable specific gravity, she comes down again. The adorable Anne is not drowned in her own pocket-handkerchief, though she has been very near it: and "The Times" announces, that the Honourable Charles Jenkinson, of the Light Dragoons, was married on the 7th instant, to Anne Louisa, the only daughter of Burley Field, Esq., of Sycamore Grange, Salop.

Merciful as we have been to this young and handsome couple, we think we have not failed to indicate dangers of no trivial description, that haunt the bush in England, though there be no lions; dangers out of which others may not probably so easily come; for, without a joke, the Farmer's Daughter in the bloom of beauty, is not to be carelessly approached. She can sing like a Syren, and is as dangerous as Circe in her enchanted island.

It is not to be inferred, however, that all farmers' daughters are like Anne Field. Plentifully as Providence has scattered beauty and good sense through our farms and granges, both these and other good things are given with a difference. There are such things amongst farmers' daughters as ranks, fortunes,

educations, dispositions, abilities, and tastes, in as much variety as any lover of variety can desire. There are farmers of all sorts, from the duke to the man of twenty acres; and, of course, there are farmers' daughters of as many degrees. There is a large class of gentlemen-farmers—men of estates and large capitals, who farm their two or three thousand acres, like some of the great corn-farmers of Northumberland; live in noble large houses, and keep their carriages and livery servants. Of course, the daughters of these, and such as these, are educated just the same, and have all the same habits and manners as any other young ladies. It is neither Cobbett, nor any other contemner of boarding-schools and such "scimmy-dish things," that will persuade these damsels to leave the carriage for the tax-cart, the piano for the spinning-wheel, nor the fashionable novel for the cook's oracle. They will "stand by their order" as stoutly as lord Grey himself.

Yet, if any body wishes to see the buxom, but housewifely, Farmer's Daughter, that is not afraid "to do a hand's-char," that can scour a pail, make a cheese, churn your butter—fresh as the day and golden as the crow-flower on the lea; can make the house look so clean and cheery that the very cat purrs on the hearth, and the goldfinch sings at the door-cheek the more blithely for it: can throw up a hay-cock, or go to market, as well as her grandmother did; why, there are plenty of such lasses yet, spite of all crinkum-crankums and fine-figuredness of modern fashion. Haven't you seen such, north and south? Haven't you met them on single horses, or on pillions, on market-days, in Devon and in Cornwall? Haven't you danced with them on Christmas-eves in Derbyshire or Durham?

There are some specimens of human nature, that not all the fashions or follies of any age can alter or make new-fashioned. They are born old-fashioned. They have an old head on young shoulders, and they can't help it if they would. You might as soon turn a wheelbarrow into a chariot, or an ass into an Arabian steed. There is Dolly Cowcabbage now, what can you make of her? Her father farms eighty acres, and milks half-a-dozen cows. He has nobody but her, and he has saved a pretty bit of money. Dolly knows of it, too. Her mother died when she was only about fourteen, and Dolly from that day began to be her father's little maid; left her play on the village-green, and village play-fellows, and began to look full of care. She began to reap, and wash, and cook, and milk, and make cheese. It is many a year since she has done all those things entirely for the house. Those who know her, say "she has not thriven an inch in height" since that day, but she has grown in bulk. She is like a young oak that got a shock from a thunder-bolt in its youth, or had its leading branch switched off by some Jerry Diddle or other as he went past to plough, and has ever since been stunted, and has run into stem. She is "a little runt-ing thing" the farmers say; a little stout-built plodding woman, with a small round rosy face. She is generally to be seen in a linesey-wolsey petticoat, a short striped bed-gown or kirtle, and a greenish-brownish kerchief carefully placed on her bosom. She is scouring pails with a whisp of straw and wet sand, and rearing them on a stone bench, by the door, to dry and sweeten; or she is calling her cows up, by blowing on a long horn; or calling her father and the men to their meals, out of the distant fields, by knocking with a pebble on a pail bottom. She is coming out of the fold-yard with the milk-pail on her head, or she is seated by the clean hearth, busy with her needle, making a pillow-case to hold the feathers she has saved.

Such is Dolly Cowcabbage. She has had offers: men know what's what, though it be in homely guise; but she only gives a quiet smile, and always says "No! I shall never marry while father lives." Those who don't like "sour grapes" begin now to say, "Marry! no! Dolly 'ull never marry. There always was an old look about her; there's the old maid written all over her—any body may see that with half an eye: why, and she's thirty now, at least." But

Dolly knows what she knows. There is a homely, close, plodding sort of a chap, that lives not far off—Tim Whetstone. He farms his fifty acres of his own. He has nobody in the house with him but an old woman, his house-keeper, who is as deaf as a bolt, and has a hundred and thirty guineas, of old gold, wrapped in an old stocking, and put into a dusty bee-hive that stands on her bed's-head. Tim knows of that, too, though the old woman thinks nobody knows of it. She has neither kith nor kin, and when the lumbago twinges her as they sit by the fire, she often says, "Tim, lad, I shall not trouble thee long, and then what two-three old traps I have 'ull be thine." Tim is certain, before long, to find honey in the old hive; and he has been seen, sly as he is, more than once, coming over the fields in the dusk of the evening, in a very direct line towards old Farmer Cowcabbage's house. He says, that it was only to seek a lamb that he had missed. But when somebody asked him if it was the same lamb that he was looking after so earnestly in church last Sunday, Tim blushed, and said, "All fools think other people like themselves," and so went away. If the old woman should drop off, I should not be very much surprised to see these two farms thrown into one, and old Samuel Cowcabbage having a bed set up in the parlour at Tim's. In the meantime, Dolly goes to market with her maund* of butter, as regularly as Saturday comes. She makes eighteen ounces to the pound, and will have the topmost price. Beautiful cream cheeses, too, Dolly manufactures; and if any one attempts to banter her down in her price, Dolly is just as quiet, as firm, as smiling, and as ready with her—"No," as she was to her sweethearts. If I were to prophesy it would be, that Dolly will marry and have half a dozen children yet, as sturdy and as plodding as Tim and herself; but there is no knowing. She tells Tim they are very well as they are—she can wait; and the truth of the matter is, they have kept company these ten years already.

A very different damsel is Miss Nancy Farley. She is the Farmer's Daughter in quite another style. Nancy's father is a farmer of the rough old school. He has none of the picturesque or the old-fashioned sentimental about him. He is a big, boorish, loud-talking, work-driving fellow, that is neither noted for his neatness in house, nor farm, nor person; for his knowledge, nor his management. He is just one of those who rough it along, get a crop though there are plenty of weeds in it; have the miller complaining that their wheat is not winnowed very clean, and the butcher that their sheep died but badly; yet, they get along, pay their rent, lay something up, and by mere dint of a hard face, a hard hand, and a hard conscience, do as well and better than some.

Nancy's father farms his two hundred acres, and yet there's a slovenly look about his premises; and Nancy has grown up pretty much as she pleased. As a girl, she romped and climbed, and played with the lads of the village. She swung on gates, and rode on donkies. When ten or twelve years old, she would ride bareback, and astride, with a horse to water, or to the blacksmith's shop. She thrashed the dogs, fetched in the eggs, suckled the calves, and then mounted on the wall of the garden, with her long chestnut hair hanging wild on her shoulders, and a raw carrot in her hand, which she was ready either to devour or to throw at any urchin that came in sight.

Such was Miss Nancy Farley in those days, but her only appellations then were Nan and Nance. Nance Farley was the true name of the wild and fearless creature. But Nance was sent for by an aunt at a distance; she was away five years; she was at length almost forgotten, and only remembered when it was necessary to call any girl as "wild as Nan Farley;" when lo! she made her appearance again, and great was the wonder. Could this be the gipsyish, unkempt, and graceless Nance Farley? This bright and buxom young lady in the black hat, and blue riding-habit? This fine young creature, with a shape

* A basket with two lids.

like a queen, and eyes like diamonds? Yes, sure enough it was her—now Miss Nancy Farley indeed.

Miss Nancy's aunt had determined that she should have what is called "a bringing up." She had sent her to a boarding-school; and whatever were Miss Nancy's accomplishments, it was clear enough that she was one of the very handsomest women that ever set foot in the parish. The store of health and vigour that she had laid up in her 'Tom-boy days, might be seen in her elastic step, and cheek—fresh as the cheek of morning itself. She was something above the middle size, of a beautiful figure, and a liveliness of motion that turned all eyes upon her. Her features were extremely fine; and her face had a mixture of life, archness, freedom, and fun, in it, that was especially attractive, and especially dangerous to look upon. Her eyes were of half-a-dozen different colours, if half-a-dozen different people might be believed; but, in truth, they were of some dark colour that was neither black nor brown, nor gray, nor hazel; but one thing was certain, they were most speaking, and laughing, and beautiful eyes, and those long flying locks were now, by some gracious metamorphosis, converted into a head of hair that was of the richest auburn, and was full enough of a sunny light to dazzle a troop of beholders.

Miss Nancy had enough of the old leaven in her to distinguish her from the general run of ladies, with their staid and quiet demeanour. She was altogether a dashing woman. She rode a beautiful light chestnut mare, with a switch tail, and her brother Ben, who was now grown up, with the ambition of cutting a figure as a gay blade of a farmer, was generally her cavalier. She hunted, and cleared gates and ditches to universal amazement. Everybody was asking, "Who is that handsome girl, that rides like an Arab?" Miss Nancy danced, and played and sung; she had a wit as ready as her looks were sweet, and all the hearts of the young farmers round were giddy with surprise and delight. Miss Nancy was not of a temper to hide herself in the shade, or to shun admiration. She was at the race, at the fair, at the ball; and everywhere she had about her a crowd of admirers, that were ready to eat one another with envy and jealousy. The young squire cast his eyes upon her, and lost no time in commencing a warm flirtation; but Nancy knew that she could not catch him for a husband—he was too much a man of the world for that, and she took care that he should not catch her. Yet she was politic enough to parade his attentions whenever he came in the way, and might be seen at the market-inn window, or occasionally on the road from church, laughing and chattering with him in a fashion that stirred the very gall of her humbler wooers. The gay young gentleman farmer, the rich miller, the smart grazier, the popular lawyer of the county town, were all ready to fight for her; nay, the old steward, who was nearly as rich as the squire himself, and was old enough to be her father, offered to make a settlement upon her, that filled her father with delight. "Take him, Nance lass, take him," he cried, "thy beauty *has* made thy fortune, that it has. Never a woman of our family were ever worth a hundredth part o' that money."

But Miss Nancy had a younger and handsomer husband in view; and Miss Nancy is Miss Nancy no longer: she has married the colonel of a marching regiment, and is at this moment the most dashing and admired lady of a great military circle, and the garrison town of ———.

THE END.



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